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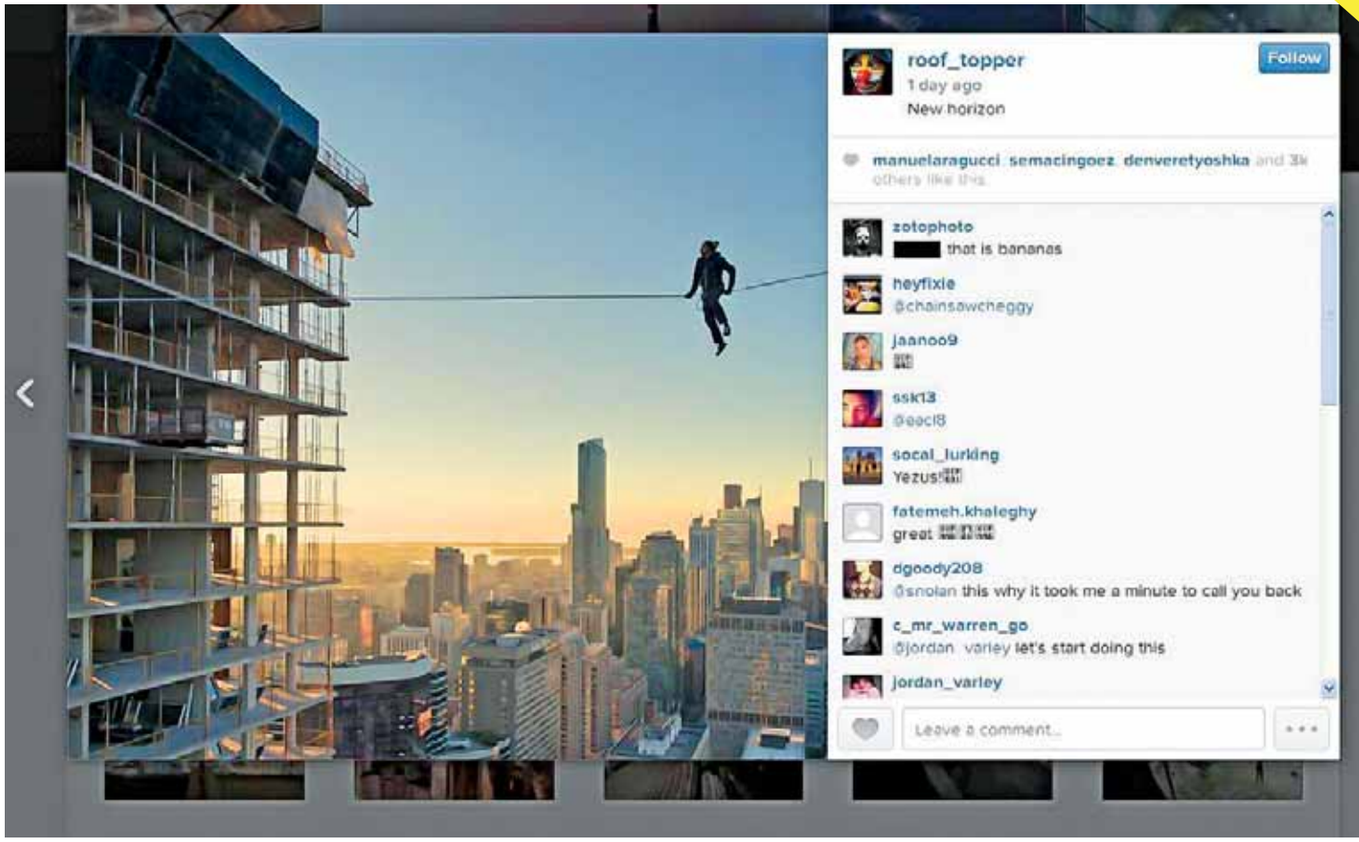

HIGH ROLLER IN T.O.

Photos posted to social media Friday show a man identified as Gerald Situ walking across a slackline 50 storeys in the air between two Toronto highrises. Situ said the photos, posted to urban photographer Tom Ryaboi's Facebook, Instagram and Imgur pages, were taken in October, adding he has performed "highlining," the term for walking on a slackline high above the ground, a few times. Police say the act could be illegal. See story, page 16. FACEBOOK PHOTO

Police recruiting women, minorities

Diverse force. About 100 women already signed up to attend Saturday session at Toronto Police College

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
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Toronto's police force wants more Asian women in its ranks. It also wants more South Asian women, more people from the LGBTQ community and more aboriginal members.

So much so, the force has started recruiting specifically from those groups.

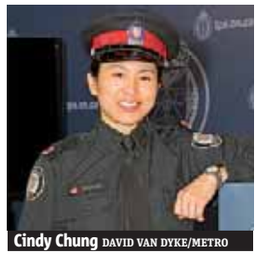
In a city where 49 per cent of people are visible minorities, according to 2011 data, only 23 per cent of uniformed officers are visible minorities. And even fewer — just 18.7 per cent — are women.

"In general, there's a need for women in the force," says Const. Cindy Chung — a point underscored by the fact that Toronto's population is actually 52 per cent female. "Because Toronto is so diverse, we're just trying to fill in the gaps."

A special recruitment session aimed at attracting Asian women to police work is planned for this weekend. And there, helping lead the session, will be Chung — all five-foot-two of her.

"I'm the second Korean female officer on the service," she says, adding that her stature shows recruits that policing is possible for them.

"It's not that hard," she tells them. "If I can do it, you can do it."


Cindy Chung DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

About 100 women have already signed up for Saturday's session at the Toronto Police College, which is open to all women despite being aimed particularly at Asians.

It's a big jump from the 50 women who showed up for a session recruiting South Asian women in May.

During the sessions, recruiters talk about what the job is like and how the application and testing process works. They then take the women through the physical test, which can be challenging for some.

"Then they can assess for themselves whether it's viable for them," Chung says.

In the past two years, there have also been sessions targeting aboriginal and LGBTQ Torontonians.

When Chung joined the force in 2006, then 32 with three young children, there were no special recruitment efforts. The first Korean woman on the force had been hired a decade before her. Now, there are about 10, she says.

"It's not one of the favoured occupations for sure in the Korean culture, especially for a female."

Chung says she had wanted to be on the police force since an OPP officer came to her high school and planted the seed in her head.

"I was an older applicant," she says. "I like to try and inspire some of the females who think they can't start a second career or that it might not work because they have children."

By the numbers

Toronto police (as of Sept. 30)

- **Uniformed officers:** 5,483
- **Women:** 1,027
- **Racial minorities:** 1,274
- **Aboriginals:** 75

The public eye? She can Hackett

Our new mayor's wife steps into the spotlight with style PAGE 52

Looking for love along the lines

Metro rides the rails to discover where along transit routes the single people are living PAGE 6

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Students turn Jeopardy's 'Watson' into paralegal

Supercomputer. U of T enters AI challenge

LUKE SIMCOE
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Need a shoulder to cry on during your divorce? Or some advice for your next legal battle? Never fear, Watson is here.

Students at the University of Toronto are putting the famous Jeopardy-playing supercomputer to work.

Last spring, IBM partnered with 10 schools, challenging them to put an entrepreneurial spin on Watson's artificial intelligence. U of T was the only Canadian institution invited, and students were tasked with pitching a business model combining Watson with legal data.

"There's a ton of money to be made in law. It's all about helping lawyers reduce their research time," said computer-science professor Paul Gries.

Ideas included Divorcesay, an app that can guide you through the legal process of a divorce, as well as Loom, which mines court data to determine the likelihood your case will succeed. The program predicted, for example, that a current bid to force the CHL to pay players a minimum wage has a 68 per cent chance of success.

The winning team, announced Wednesday, pitched Ross, an "electronic paralegal" aimed at assisting lawyers with case research. In January, the team will fly to New York to compete against nine other schools for a chance to win $100,000 in seed capital.

"This is just the first step," said Jimoh Ovbiagele, a member of U of T's winning team. "Our ultimate goal is to build a great Canadian company."

At its core, Watson is a computer program that can make sense of natural language. It ingests large amounts of text, processes it and uses it to answer questions. During its run on Jeopardy, for example, it "read" all of Wikipedia.

"From an artificial intelligence point of view, it's almost impossible. Only IBM, with millions of dollars in investment, could make something like Watson," said Steve Engels, a U of T professor and one of the event's organizers.

Students compared the experience to raising a child.

"When we first got Watson, it was like a baby. We had to feed it and train it," said Amy Jie Jin Sha, a member of the Divorcesay team. "And then over the course of the year, it became an adult."

Sven Dickinson, chair of the university's computer-science department, said the challenge taught students business skills that will serve them well even if they don't launch startups.

"The fact is that our students are likely to be recruited by startups. It's going to be important for them to be able to evaluate the offer in front of them," said Tim Capes, one of the business mentors brought on board for the program.

Implications

'Human element'

Watson may be able to predict the outcome of your court case or respond to legal precedent questions, but don't expect it to pass the bar exam anytime soon.

"You can't replace a lawyer in the court with a computer," said Yana Davis, one of the students behind the Loom project. "There's still a human element in the courtroom. There's an element of passion that a computer can't do."

At best, U of T professor Steve Engels said Watson will make research easier, reducing the number of lawyers needed for a case.

Jeopardy champions Ken Jennings, left, and Brad Rutter, right, look on as the IBM computer Watson beats them to the buzzer during a practice round. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

University of Toronto students and Watson Challenge winners, from left, Jimoh Ovbiagele, Shuai Wang, Akash Venkat, Pargles Wenz Dall'Oglio and Andrew Arruda. LUKE SIMCOE/METRO

Jian Ghomeshi booked guests that shared his agent, lawyer

Jack Ross and Chris Taylor. Pattern replicated many times over seven years Ghomeshi hosted Q, according to Torstar News Service review

When Toronto-born singer Lindi Ortega appeared on Q with Jian Ghomeshi in 2012, it was the second time in a year, a great boost to a young musician.

As Ghomeshi gushed about her performances for his Canadian and American audience, entertainment lawyer Chris Taylor, who manages Ortega, watched from the other side of a glass panel in the CBC control room where Q is produced. Jack Ross, a powerful Toronto agent who also represents Ortega, was not there that day but like Taylor, he was the beneficiary of Ghomeshi's skilful promotion of a client.

What Ghomeshi did not share with his listeners was this fact: He too was a client of agent Jack Ross and lawyer Chris Taylor.

Jian Ghomeshi THE CANADIAN PRESS

This pattern was replicated many times over the seven years Ghomeshi hosted Q, according to a Torstar News Service review of Q shows and the client lists of Taylor and Ross.

CBC spokesman Chuck Thompson said the national broadcaster knew that Ghomeshi was represented by Taylor and Ross, and that those men's clients often appeared on Q. Thompson said it was not a problem because "Q is an entertainment program and it's not bound by the same standards and practices we have in place with our news and current affairs programs."

"Some people (at CBC) were aware of Jian's representation by Chris Taylor and Jack Ross. It's a small industry and both Chris and Jack represent a lot of Canadian talent, some of whom have been featured on Q along with many other artists who weren't represented by either Taylor or Ross," Thompson told Torstar.

Thompson did not say whether he thought Ghomeshi should have disclosed his connection to his listeners and to viewers of Q's television show, where many of the acts performed, some in front of a live audience.

Neither Taylor nor Ross have responded to requests from Torstar to comment for this story. Ortega told Torstar she was aware Ghomeshi was represented by the same people who represent her.

The apparent favouring of some musicians over others has rankled artists who have found themselves shut out of Q, a national radio program in Canada that is syndicated in the U.S.

Toronto artist Lindi Ortega says she was aware Ghomeshi was represented by the same people who represent her.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

"We have just given up trying to get on Q," said the manager of one band, who asked not to be identified because he feared speaking out would negatively effect the act he manages.

"To us it is a clear conflict of interest. "

Ross, an agent who discovered Ghomeshi in the '80s and helped him become a successful musician with Moxy Fruvous, cut ties with the radio host when the scandal involving abuse allegations widened in November.

It is unclear if Taylor is still Ghomeshi's lawyer. Taylor is a partner at the entertainment law firm he founded, Taylor Klein Oballa LLP.

In the music business, exposure through a culture and arts show like Q is gold, music industry veterans say.

Ghomeshi has continued to be represented by Taylor and Ross throughout his hosting career, according to information on Taylor and Ross's websites and in press releases and other documents.

Sources say both men have helped Ghomeshi work out contract deals with CBC. Agent Ross was also involved in booking Ghomeshi for lucrative speaking engagements.

During the seven years Q has been on the air, many of Ghomeshi's fellow clients have been his guests. Torstar could not find any examples of Ghomeshi disclosing this to his audience.

Among the artists promoted by Q who, like Ghomeshi, are represented by Taylor and Ross: Drake, Buck 65, and Lights.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

All kinds of contacts

'Wow, you just sold 10,000 records...'

Country singer Lindi Ortega first appeared on Q in September 2011 to promote her debut album Little Red Boots.

She was back almost exactly one year later, playing songs on the Friday Live portion of a September 2012 program to promote her new album, Cigarettes and Truckstops. After she played her first song, Ghomeshi said: "Wow, you just sold 10,000 records with that performance just now."

Later, as he wrapped up the interview, Ghomeshi pointed out to his listeners that Ortega has a solid team supporting her. "You got a great team with you ... you got Chris Taylor sitting on the other side of the glass there."

Ghomeshi concluded, noting: "I think this is the fastest we have had someone back on Q."

In his response to Torstar, CBC spokesman Thompson said: "The team on Q have all kinds of contacts in the industry that allow the program to book great bands, filmmakers, actors and other talented artists the audience want to hear from and know more about."

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Where the singles at?

Metro's Toronto on Track data project breaks down the gender and marital status of residents along transit lines.

JESSICA SMITH CROSS
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Gender divide

Women opting for suburban living

Women obviously live all over the city, but Metro's Toronto on Track project reveals that more men than women live downtown. Outside the core, it's the opposite.

When Metro tracked demographic data in the neighbourhoods surrounding the city's transit stations, we found the slight but significant trend.

Men are most concentrated near the Village, at Wellesley and College stations, at 54 per cent. However, the higher proportion of men persists throughout the core, not only near the Gay Village.

Around all the subway stations south of Bloor, there are more men than women by about one to three per cent of the total.

York University geography professor Valerie Preston said there are at least two contributing factors. "On average, men still earn more than women, which means they can afford more expensive housing right downtown," she said. "The second is women are more likely to be single parents.... They have lower incomes but are looking for larger dwelling spaces, and those would be outside the core."

Across the city, there are more women than men, as women tend to live longer.

TORONTO ON TRACK

This is the fourth in a five-part series exploring the neighbourhoods that surround Toronto's existing and proposed rapid-transit stations.

→ Tomorrow: We look at the Sheppard Line, then and now.

→ Online: Get caught up on the series and explore Metro's interactive tool yourself at metronews.ca/toronto-on-track.

Downtown

Single in the city

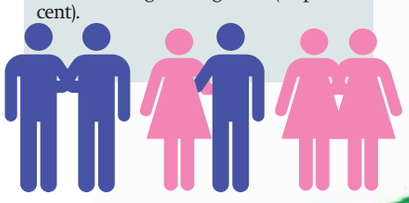
Single straight ladies and gay men might have the most luck downtown. Not only are there (slightly) more men than women, but downtown is the area with the highest proportion of single residents.

More than 60 per cent of residents (over the age of 15) who live near the stations of the downtown subway U are neither married nor in a common-law relationship, compared to 50 per cent of Toronto's population overall. (That includes 65 per cent of the residents near Queen's Park and College stations and 63 per cent of the residents near Dundas and Queen stations.)

The downtown core has also increasingly become a home to a younger demographic, according to Preston.

"We used to talk about the downtown core being young singles and old seniors, primarily women. That's been changing," she said, noting the area does not have as many seniors now. "The downtown core is increasingly for young single people and people at the beginning of their partnered-up lives."

There are other concentrations of singles near York University (64 per cent) and Yorkdale Mall (62 per cent) as well as at Yonge and Eglinton (57 per cent).



Line 1. Yonge-University-Spadina

Line 2. Bloor-Danforth

Line 3. Scarborough

Line 4. Sheppard

56%
The station with the highest proportion of women living nearby is St. Clair at 56 per cent. It is also the station with the highest concentration of divorced residents nearby.

62%
Yorkdale is the station that has the most singles (62 per cent) where there is a higher proportion of women than men living nearby (54 per cent).

66%
Spadina station, where the Bloor-Danforth and Yonge-University lines meet, is the stop with the most singles. Two-thirds (66 per cent) of the residents are single.

20%
The least family-served station is Queen, on the Yonge line. Only one in five residences here are home to children.

54%
Perhaps unsurprisingly, the stations nearest the Village are where there's the highest proportion of men. Fifty-four per cent of the residents in the areas around Wellesley and College stations are men.

This map, based on data provided by Environics, shows the gender breakdown of people who live near Toronto's current transit stations. The blue stations have slightly more men than women living nearby, while the pink stations have slightly more women than men. The larger the dot, the higher the proportion of nearby residents who are single. Go to metronews.ca/toronto-on-track and use the interactive tool to find out the numbers for your station.

Children

Tots and transit

There are far more families with children outside of the downtown core, in the inner suburbs. Families with young children use transit differently, said University of Toronto geographer Matti Siemiatycki.

"You get more house and more space, and there's a cost dimension too," he said. "With multiple children you need more space, and that's accessible in the inner suburbs."

Siemiatycki said that rapid transit provides a backbone for transit trips but notes that parents with young children typically need transit for shorter, more local trips, usually meaning a bus rather than a subway.

"We need to be focused on mobility strategies, rather than just building single lines," he said. "We need to be serving people with a variety of characteristics."

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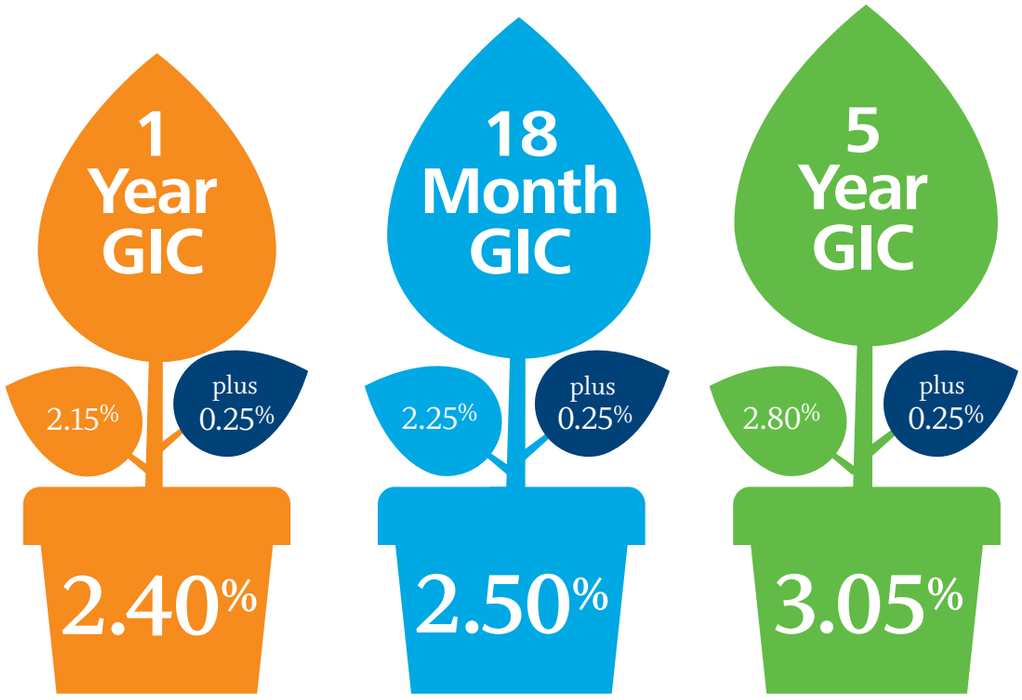

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From the Speaker's mouth

Quoted

"You know what I'm sick and tired of? These insults and the garbage that the members of council have said in the past day. It's insulting and you should be ashamed of yourself."

— During a September 2011 debate on appointing citizens to city boards and committees

Quoted

"What a dictator. What a dictator."

— Reacting to comments from Coun. Joe Mihevc during a September 2007 debate about closing community centres

Quoted

"I don't like it when women's groups try to separate women from men. I mean, we've come a long way. I think we're all treated equally."

— In reference to fellow female councillors

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

Quoted

"You can stab me as many times as you want, I'll still be standing."

— Reacting to comments from Coun. Adam Vaughan during a March 2012 council meeting on the TTC board

Quoted

"Why would you want someone on the executive that continually bashes the mayor's agenda? That is stupid."

— During a February 2013 debate about geographic representation on the mayor's executive committee

Quoted

"There are times when they walk by me and they whisper to me, 'You're a bitch.'"

— During an August 2011 debate on whether the Ford administration should apologize for behaviour during a council meeting that included a representative from the Toronto City Women's Alliance

Toronto City Council Speaker. Frances Nunziata reclaims her chair

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
rosemary.westwood@metronews.ca

Frances Nunziata returned to city hall as Speaker Wednesday despite a backlash from some councillors over her performance in the job over the last four years.

"There was some opposition, but I believe in the past four years I've been able to chair the council meetings regardless of the disruptions that we've had, which has made it very difficult," she told Metro.

"I think that I did a good job."

As Speaker, she's charged with keeping order and decorum during council meetings. A veteran of municipal politics since 1985 and former mayor of the City of York, Nunziata presided over a sometimes caustic atmosphere at city hall under Rob Ford.

Quoted

"There was some opposition, but I believe in the past four years I've been able to chair the council meetings regardless of the disruptions that we've had, which has made it very difficult.... I think that I did a good job."

Frances Nunziata

Nunziata was herself known for zingers and occasional shouting matches during meetings.

No matter who is speaking at any one time at the council meetings, Nunziata says the tone at city hall has to change overall.

"I think what's really important at council meetings is that all members of council respond to each other and work together as a team, regardless of what your feelings are, your personal feelings with each other," she said.

As for reports that Nunziata will head to Ottawa and Queen's Park to observe and learn from other Speakers, she said it's been suggested, but added there's no formal plan in place.

"I think it's a good idea," she said.

"I think that what we can learn from the different levels of government will be very beneficial to us as a city council."

And if you want to learn more about Nunziata's own style, above are some of her finest moments on the council floor, according to reports out of city hall.

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It's the Mammalian Diving Reflex effect at the AGO

Catering to a different audience. Art Gallery of Ontario welcomes artist-in-residence with aim of attracting more young faces

GILBERT NGABO
gilbert.ngabo@metronews.ca

Keeping young people engaged in events like the ones shown here is one of the big aims of Mammalian Diving Reflex. COURTESY OF MICHAEL BARKER

A new initiative at the Art Gallery of Ontario is expected to help boost youth engagement in the world of arts.

Mammalian Diving Reflex will be the AGO's artist-in-residence this winter, working on a project aimed at figuring out how receptive young people are to the institution.

In collaboration with the gallery's youth council, the artists will be testing gallery staff to see how open they are to youth in general. The exercise will be about fostering "social capital" and "collegiality," said Darren O'Donnell, artistic director at Mammalian.

"We'll be looking to see who is more friendly with the youth, who has a cottage we might be able to visit, who can hire a member of our youth to be their babysitter," he said."We are trying to build networks between the youth council and the gallery staff.

"That's very important in the cultural industry."

By the time their stay is over in early February, Mammalian will have interviewed 40 staff members and have a series of artistic events involving youths across the city. Based on their findings, the artists will formulate and submit recommendations about how the AGO can get more young people involved.

Staff at the AGO was looking for that kind of innovative approach when they connected with Mammalian.

"We are always looking for people whose art has some public engagement," said Paola Poletto, manager of the gallery's artist-in-residence and adult programs. "It's nice to find artists who are focusing their energy on the youth."

Mammalian is known as a group of social practice artists who specialize in theatre and performance, specifically targeting youths and priority neighbourhoods. They view innovative art as a way to spark generosity and equity across the world.

The artist-in-residence program was launched three years ago, and last year started to look for more collaboration with Toronto artists.

Those in residence get access to resources, staff and ideas that allow them to connect with gallery visitors and the audience in general.

Every year, there are four artists (groups or individuals) in residence. They change each season.

What's in a name?

Mammalian Diving Reflex:

- The artists get their name from a survival mechanism known as, well, mammalian diving reflex.
- When mammals become emerged in a cold or wet environment, their system can be affected and they have to find a way to keep air in their lungs to survive longer. It's a way to survive by not using all of the oxygen in their blood.
- "It's a metaphor for surviving in difficult times. We are also arguably in difficult times and have to find a way to survive in the stress," said Darren O'Donnell, the group's artistic director.
- "It's a metaphor for surviving."

Environmental concerns over $12B pipeline narrowed

Ontario's concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed Energy East pipeline narrowed considerably Wednesday following a meeting between premiers Kathleen Wynne and Jim Prentice of Alberta.

Ontario and Quebec had set out seven principles for the $12-billion pipeline project, which would carry western crude to refineries in eastern Canada, the most notable relating to its potential impact on climate change.

But after meeting Prentice in her office, Wynne said her concerns were limited to greenhouse gas emissions from the pipeline project itself, not from the so-called upstream emissions resulting from getting the crude out of the ground, refining and burning it.

"On this project, we're talking about the reality that greenhouse gas emissions as they pertain to the project in Ontario, they need to be taken into account," she told reporters. "That's what the principle says."

Wynne insisted her stance was not a change in position, but she couldn't say exactly what potential greenhouse gas emissions would be generated by the pipeline project that have her concerned.

"That's for the discussion," she said. "We haven't outlined that."

TransCanada Corp. has applied to use a repurposed natural gas pipeline to carry crude two-thirds of the way across the country, and to build a pipeline extension that would connect it to Saint John, N.B.

The National Energy Board will deal with all the principles raised by Ontario and Quebec as it reviews TransCanada's application, said Prentice.

"I have a better appreciation of where Premier Wynne is coming from in terms of the effects of that project in Ontario," he said. "The principles that have been put forward are logically the matters that the National Energy Board will be considering, and it doesn't surprise me that Ontario will be putting forward their perspective on those matters."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Premier Kathleen Wynne wears a Calgary Stampeders jersey while meeting with Alberta Premier Jim Prentice following a friendly bet on the Grey Cup at Queen's Park on Wednesday. DARREN CALABRESE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Demetri Martin brings laughs to T.O.

Standup comedy. The comedian who has appeared on The Daily Show with Jon Stewart will perform on Saturday

LUCY HAINES
For Metro Toronto

On paper, Demetri Martin is an accomplished actor, writer and standup comedian, with stints on The Daily Show with Jon Stewart and Late Night with Conan O'Brien. The guy must have it made, right?

Not necessarily, said Martin who is currently on tour across Canada and parts of the United States.

"I get impatient — I have many unfinished projects on the go, and I try to chip away at all of them, but I procrastinate. And I like to daydream," said the 41-year-old New York native, who now calls California home.

Calling standup a bumpy ride that he does in spurts, Martin said he tries to fit in all his creative endeavours while on the road.

"I read, write, draw and keep a notebook to write short jokes in. It's my personal library of ideas," Martin said. "The travel — hotels, airport security — is the hard part, but on stage, I get energy from good audiences. And Canadians are warm, welcoming and open to improvising."

Demetri Martin GETTY IMAGES

Martin said despite the glamorous-seeming work he does, his life looks much like anyone else's.

"I used to walk much more in New York, so in California I work at a treadmill desk when I first get up in the morning — I walk briskly to help my brain and keep the creative energy going. The rest of the day, I wish I was working out or meditating," he said.

In truth, Martin is hugely productive — he published a book of drawings last year, and is working on a book of short fiction for the spring. When time allows, he squeezes in guest work on the Showtime series House of Lies. And, he's now editing an indie feature film that he wrote and directed, tentatively titled Dean.

"In my 20s, I was unhappy in law school, so I dropped out to give standup a try. Sometimes, I have to remind myself that I've been able to make a living at being creative for over 15 years," Martin said. "I want to work as long as I can — standup, film, drawings — so I take that creativity in many directions."

Quoted

"I want to work as long as I can — stand up, film, drawings — so I take that creativity in many directions."
Demetri Martin

If you go

Demetri Martin performs his The Persistence of Jokes show at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre on Saturday, Dec. 6 at 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. Tickets are $39.50 and are available at ticketmaster.ca.

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The Lakeridge Health Network's Oshawa hospital, where 14 staff accessed private patient files. LUCAS OLENIUK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Staff snooped into 500 patients' files

Oshawa. Fourteen have been disciplined for accessing files in hospital's mental health program: CEO

Fourteen staff members in the mental health program at Lakeridge Health in Oshawa inappropriately accessed more than 500 patients' files — including mental health patients and the staffers' own family members — over a period of 10 years, the hospital has revealed.

Lakeridge president and CEO Kevin Empey told Torstar News Service the hospital's electronic audit system detected an inappropriate access to one patient's file in June of this year. That prompted staff across a number of departments to conduct a manual review, which showed that 578 patients had had their files accessed by the 14 staff members going back to 2004.

Some of the files were for patients in the mental health program, some were files belonging to relatives of patients in the mental health program, and others were the files of the staffers' own family members, the hospital said.

The investigation, in which the hospital collaborated with the provincial Information and Privacy Commissioner, concluded last month. Letters went out to affected patients on Nov. 24.

The hospital says there is no evidence patient information made it out of the hospital. Empey said the 14 employees were disciplined, but would not say how, nor specify their positions. He said they had accessed the files out of simple curiosity or concern for particular patients.

"I take this seriously. I'm extremely unhappy and disappointed in my team," he said. "I'm apologizing that this has happened."

He said neither the hospital nor the privacy commissioner determined that the police should be notified. A representative of the Canadian Union of Public Employees said the union had no comment "at this time."

In a statement, Acting Commissioner Brian Beamish said that his office opened a file last August after being contacted by Lakeridge, saying: "Lakeridge Health did take steps to advise us of the measures it had or would be taking to minimize or reduce the risk of a similar incident in (the) future, and in these circumstances we were satisfied with their actions."

The privacy breach at Lakeridge is the latest in a string of similar incidents at hospitals around the GTA.

Empey said he is communicating with staff about when they can access hospital files, and will require all staff to sign a code of conduct every year to remind them of their responsibilities. They are currently required to do so only at the time of hiring.

Toronto lawyer Elyse Sunshine, who advises health professionals and clinics on privacy issues, said these breaches demonstrate that better training is needed.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"These investigations into breaches are time-consuming and cost money, so it's better to do it at the front end and train people."

Elyse Sunshine, Toronto lawyer who advises health professionals on privacy issues, on how to improve conduct in hospitals

Bidding for all-ages domination in T.O.

Johnnyland. Promoter fills the gap for teens that crave live music

IAN GORMELY
toronto@metronews.ca

The all-ages Johnnyland crowds like this one create a "high-octane atmosphere," says founder Dan Drory-Lehrer.
JAKOB BURKHARDT/FOR METRO

It's a familiar story to anyone who grew up a teenage music fan: Your favourite band is coming to town, but they're playing at a bar and you're underage.

"Older crowds, they disregard all-ages stuff," says local promoter Dan Drory-Lehrer. "And venues don't want to give it a shot a lot of the time."

Last spring, Drory-Lehrer was a 19-year-old aspiring radio broadcaster who'd been given a DJ gig at a Kensington Market bar. The caveat was that he had to build a night of entertainment around his set. He quickly recruited his 16-year-old brother's band, Professor H & the Bandits, and six other local groups, all of whom boasted members still in high school. Their ages barred most of the groups from playing in the 19+ venue, so Drory-Lehrer moved the show and sold it out.

Recognizing a gaping hole in the city's live-music landscape, he created Johnnyland, an all-ages music community. Fast forward a year-and-a-half and Drory-Lehrer, now 21, has replicated and grown that success, selling out the 850-seat Opera House three times this year alone. "The best parts of my youth were going to concerts. I wanted to keep the opportunity there for youth in Toronto."

But the shows are just one aspect of Johnnyland's bid for all-ages domination. Along with running an online community that showcases the bands who've played Johnnyland shows, there are more than 25 Johnnyland reps at local high schools and universities. "They get volunteer hours, but they also get a percentage of the ticket sales."

Despite the success, Drory-Lehrer isn't resting on his laurels. Plans are in the works to launch a record label to release music from Johnnyland-affiliated bands. He also has ambitious ideas for expansion.

"I'm looking into finding a way to bring Johnnyland to other cities. I'd be lying if I said that I wouldn't want to see Johnnyland around the world."

Johnnyland Returns ... Again! Friday at the Opera House, at 735 Queen St. West. $20 at the door. See johnnyland.ca for details.

Lineup

Friday night's Johnnyland showcase at the Opera House packs an eclectic mix of bands into one night of music:

- **Albeit (psychedelic folk rock), ART the band (smooth jazz and funk through an indie rock filter), Brick Kick (thrashy punk rock pranksters), Closed Circuit (golden-aged hip hop with live instrumentation), Ghost Daze (fuzzy garage rock from the city's east side), The Loud Pack (soaring indie rock), Pins & Needles ('50s female doo-wop meets '60s garage rock) and Professor H & the Bandits (proto punk and rock 'n' roll).**

Toronto gets two U2 shows

Bono. JOEL RYAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

U2 will hit the road next year on the first leg of a world tour that kicks off in Canada.

Promoter Live Nation announced the rock band's iNNOCENCE + eXPERIENCE tour on Wednesday. Tickets go on sale on Monday.

The tour swings through North America next summer before heading to Europe in September 2015. It will be the first time in a decade that the band has focused on indoor arenas.

U2 is obviously hoping for a complete recovery by lead singer Bono, who was seriously hurt in a bicycle accident in New York last month. During a surprise gig in New York's Times Square this week, Bruce Springsteen and Chris Martin filled in for the vocalist.

The band was also hit by a backlash after they released their most recent album, Songs of Innocence, free on iTunes. Some users were upset that the release was automatically added to their iTunes library, whether they wanted it or not. Apple eventually created a tool to delete the album.

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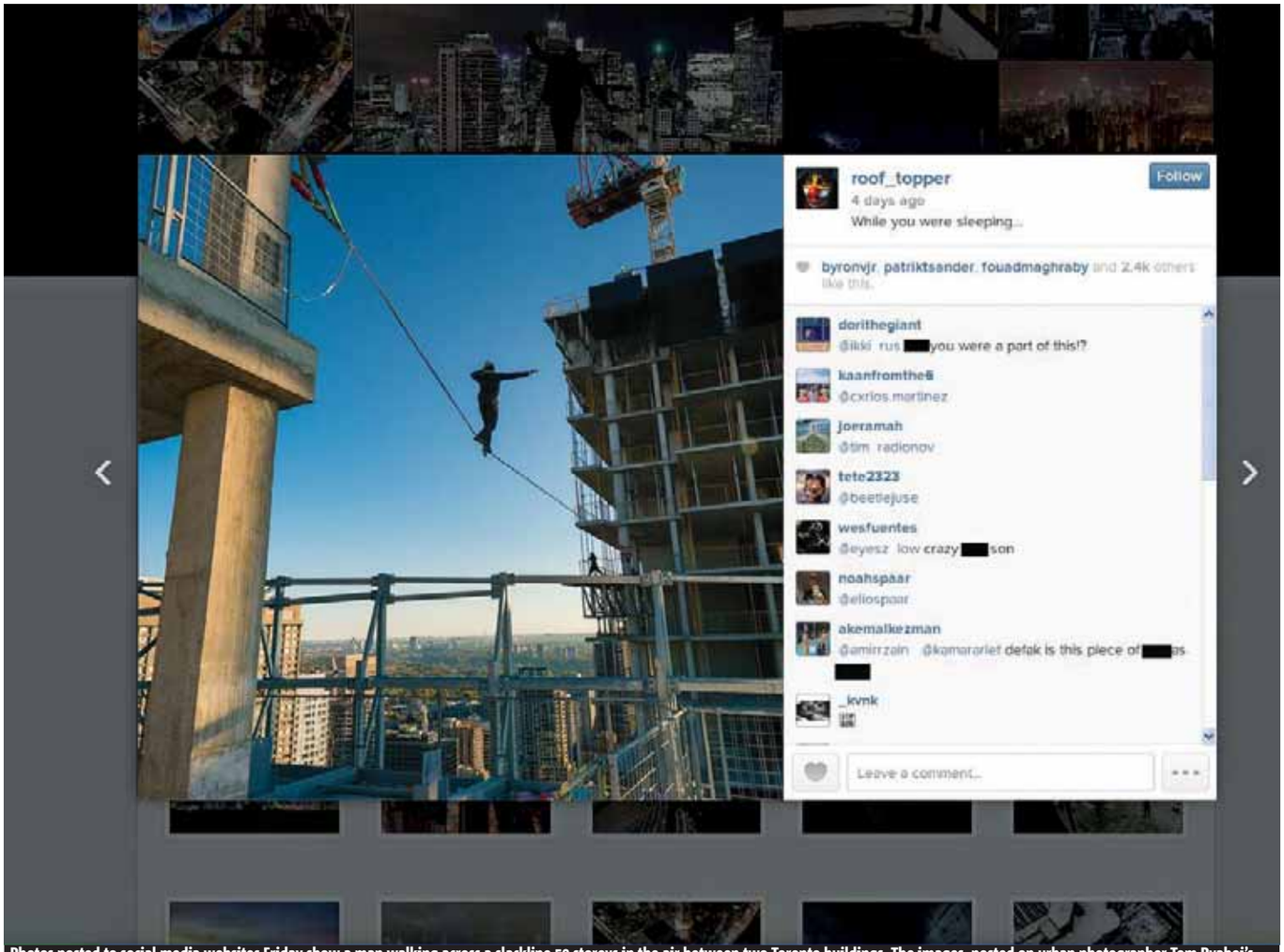
Jaw-dropping images of man slacklining above city

Man on nylon webbing. Some hail the images of a man high in the air between two high rises as 'art,' while police warn the stunt could be illegal



Photos posted to social media websites Friday show a man walking across a slackline 50 storeys in the air between two Toronto buildings. The images, posted on urban photographer Tom Ryaboi's Facebook, Instagram and Imgur pages, show Gerald Situ walking across a slackline between two highrise buildings under construction. Situ said the photos were taken in October and said he has performed "highlining," the term for walking on a slackline high above the ground, a few times previously. FACEBOOK PHOTO

Jaw-dropping photos of a man teetering on a thin rope 50 storeys in the air between two Toronto high rises recently surfaced online and have since disappeared.

The images, posted on urban photographer Tom Ryaboi's Facebook and Instagram pages Friday, showed a man walking across a slackline — a piece of nylon webbing about an inch thick — strung between two Toronto buildings. The images made the rounds on popular news sharing site Reddit Monday.

Toronto police say the stunt could be illegal. To slackliners, however, it's "art."

"It's not as scary as you think once you're there," slackliner Gerald Situ told Torstar News Service Tuesday, confirming he is the daredevil in the photos. "It's a challenge but it's just pushing your own limits."

Situ would not get into details about where the incident took place but said he and others involved — he did not say who — accessed the 50th storey of a building under construction in October by walking up stairs. He confirmed he wore a safety harness.

"You are giving me palpitations," one person commented on Ryaboi's Instagram picture.

"Sick shot!!" posted another.

The photos have since been removed from Ryaboi's accounts.

"There are massive safety concerns," Toronto police Const. David Hopkinson.

The building owners could be liable if an injury or fatality occurred, he said. If someone complains, charges could include trespassing, break and enter or mischief, he said.

"The walking in between the ropes is not illegal itself. It is what you have to do (in order) to do that," he said. "You need permission to enter property."

Hopkinson said he was not aware of any complaints about the recent stunt.

The slackline appears to have been strung up between two buildings being built near Bay St. and St. Mary St.

The Pemberton Group, which owns the "U Condos" currently under construction in that area, did not respond to requests for comment from Torstar.

Torstar found Ryaboi and Situ in a park Monday afternoon practising slacklining. Ryaboi, who is known for photographing cityscapes from the tops of skyscrapers, declined to comment on the photos.

"I'm definitely scared up there, but I've gotten comfortable at the same time," he told the Torstar in a 2012 article about his love of "rooftopping."

Situ's stunt is qualified as "urban highlining," which involves stringing a slackline high up in the air in a city, usually between buildings, said Slacklining Canada founder Xavier Vivas.

"It's an art. It's part of the urban art," said Vivas. "It's a very safe sport if it's set up properly."

Once considered a niche sport for rock climbers, slacklining is becoming mainstream, with amateurs often seen practicing in Toronto parks, tying lines low to the ground between trees.

For those with extreme tastes, "spacelining" — slacklining at even more extreme heights — is also an option, said Vivas.

Professional slackliner Andy Lewis walked between two hot air balloons 4,000 feet in the air earlier this year. He wore a parachute.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"It's an art. It's part of the urban art. It's a very safe sport if it's set up properly."

Slacklining Canada founder Xavier Vivas

A legal high

If a person wanted to carry out a death-defying stunt similar to Gerald Situ's — legally — they would need permission from the building owners and would likely need to notify police to clear the street below, Toronto police Const. David Hopkinson said.

- A spokesperson for the City of Toronto's Municipal Licensing and Standards said it does not deal with tightrope or slackline licensing or permits, "if indeed there is one need(ed)."

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NDP. Mulcair endorses stricter rules for firearms

A New Democrat government would ensure police are able to track every firearm in Canada, but would also seek to avoid the pitfalls that made the now-defunct long-gun registry so controversial, Tom Mulcair said Wednesday.

The NDP leader disputed the Conservative government's contention that gun registration is an unfair, onerous requirement for law-abiding gun owners.

"I have nothing against seeing honest farmers and duck hunters be able to have their weapons," Mulcair said outside an NDP caucus meeting. "But, you know, that honest hunter who goes out with his pickup truck, it's a registered pickup truck ... the trailer's registered and the 4X4 is registered. Heck, his dog is registered."

New Democrats "have confidence in the ability of farmers and duck hunters to fill out a form," he added. While farmers and hunters are entitled to own firearms, Mulcair suggested there must be strict limits.

NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair
THE CANADIAN PRESS

"What kind of duck do you hunt with an assault weapon? A pterodactyl?"

There's no reason a system of tracking firearms has to go "overboard," as the Liberals did when they created the long-gun registry and imposed criminal penalties for failure to register, Mulcair said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Analysis. Veterans Affairs underspent on war graves

Veterans Affairs spent millions less than it budgeted for maintaining war graves last year in cemeteries like those in Italy visited recently by Julian Fantino, a report reveals.

The departmental performance review of the memorial and cemetery maintenance program shows just 2,500 of 7,000 grave markers were properly maintained last year.

The government earmarked more than $18.5 million in fiscal 2013-14 to help preserve the memory of Canadians who died serving their country, the programs analysis report shows.

Instead, the department spent $2.6 million less, or just over $15.9 million, with just eight people doing the preservation work — far short of the 41 full-time employees originally projected for the program.

The analysis also says foreign service-providers completed maintenance work on only 80 per cent of Canada's overseas memorials, short of their 85 per cent target.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Class action

A federal government lawyer is asking B.C.'s highest court to throw out a class-action lawsuit by Canadian Forces members injured in Afghanistan who say they've been stripped of benefits.

Jean Béliveau was a 'role model to us all'

Serge Laflamme lights a candle at a statue of Jean Béliveau on Wednesday in Longueuil, Que. The Montreal Canadiens hockey legend passed away Tuesday at the age of 83. On his death, he was remembered as a "legend" and a "role model to us all." Tributes poured in from the hockey world and from political leaders after the Canadiens announced that perhaps their best player ever had died. "He was a hero to generations of his fellow French Canadians and hockey fans everywhere. Our sport has lost a great ambassador," said Canadiens owner and president Geoff Molson.

PHOTO: RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS
TEXT: THE CANADIAN PRESS

For more coverage, see page 60

Prostitution law comes on anniversary of massacre

Dec. 6. Anniversary of the Montreal Massacre is also a nationwide day of action on violence against women

It's "sick and twisted" that Canada's controversial new prostitution bill comes into force on a day dedicated to eradicating violence against women, says one of the women behind a successful court challenge of the old laws.

The new legislation, known as the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act, comes into force on Saturday, Dec. 6, which is also the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

The day — the anniversary of the shooting deaths of 14 women at Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal at the hands of gunman Marc Lepine — has evolved into an occasion to commemorate all female victims of violence.

Those who work in the sex industry have expressed their disdain for the new prostitution laws, which they fear will result in more victims, not fewer.

"I think that it's a really sick and twisted day for it to happen," said Valerie Scott, one of three women behind the landmark Supreme Court case that declared Canada's legislation on prostitution unconstitutional.

Sensitivity issue?

"I'm sure if they had thought about it, they might have picked another date, if they were a bit sensitive."

NDP justice critic Francoise Boivin

"That day should not solely be for women who were murdered by Marc Lepine, it should also be for women who were murdered by Robert Pickton," said Scott.

Pickton, a B.C. pig farmer, was convicted almost exactly seven years ago for the gruesome murders of six prostitutes, and had been charged in the deaths of 20 others.

The case was among those referenced by the Supreme Court last year when it struck down Canada's prostitution laws, arguing that they deprived sex workers of the ability to work safely.

The decision gave the government one year to establish new laws. The new bill was introduced June 4, reviewed by both the House of Commons and Senate and granted royal assent on Nov. 6.

By the bill's own terms, it was slated to come into effect 30 days after that — which is how Dec. 6 came to be the date.

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AMMI Canada to object to Lyme bill

An organization representing Canada's infectious-diseases specialists plans to raise objections to a private member's bill on Lyme disease at a Senate committee hearing.

Their concern: the bill's preamble appears to support the notion that significant numbers of people in Canada are suffering from a condition they believe to be chronic Lyme disease and that these individuals are being failed by a medical system that refuses to accept that diagnosis, leaving sick people to suffer.

The organization, the Association of Medical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (AMMI) Canada, is hoping to persuade the committee to strip three paragraphs from the preamble to the bill, saying it can support the rest of the document.

But Green Party Leader Elizabeth May, who proposed the bill, says that isn't possible at this stage.

May, an MP for the British Columbia riding of Saanich-Gulf Islands, says the preamble cannot be altered without sending the bill back to the House of Commons. And that, she says, would effectively kill the bill; there would not be enough time for it to make its way back through Parliament before next fall's election.

The fear held by infectious-disease specialists is that in criticizing the existing guidelines developed over several years to diagnose Lyme disease, the bill tacitly supports an alternative method that an independent review — commissioned by Britain's Health Protection Agency — found to not provide a sound, empirical approach to Lyme disease diagnosis and care.

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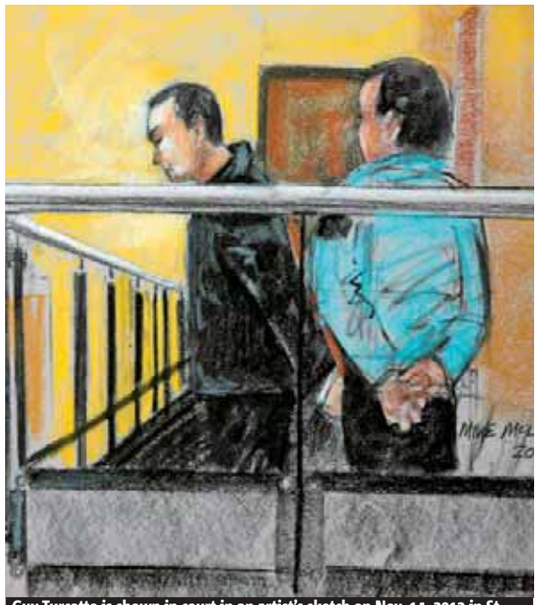

Guy Turcotte is shown in court in an artist's sketch on Nov. 14, 2013 in St. Jerome, Que. The former Quebec doctor charged with first-degree murder in the deaths of his two children will remain a free man pending his new trial.

MIKE MCLAUGHLIN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Turcotte free until fall trial

Conditional freedom. Man charged in the stabbing deaths of his two children must live with his uncle until September trial date

Guy Turcotte

The Quebec Court of Appeal has ruled that Turcotte should not be incarcerated ahead of his trial in September.

- **Not so fast.** His freedom comes with several conditions attached, including having to stay with his uncle and not being allowed to contact his ex-wife.

A former Quebec doctor charged with first-degree murder in the deaths of his two children will remain a free man pending his new trial.

The Quebec Court of Appeal ruled Wednesday that Guy Turcotte should not be incarcerated ahead of the trial, which is set to begin next September.

A jury found Turcotte not criminally responsible in 2011 in the stabbing deaths of five-year-old Olivier and three-year-old Anne-Sophie in 2009.

Quebec Superior Court Justice Andre Vincent granted Turcotte bail a few months ago, saying he does not represent a danger to society and is entitled to the presumption of innocence.

The Crown appealed that decision and argued Vincent erred when he said releasing Turcotte would not undermine the public's faith in the judicial system.

Crown attorneys presented the panel of three appeals-court justices with media reports critical of the decision to grant Turcotte bail.

Lawyers argued the newspaper articles were "the real public opinion."

The appeals court rejected the Crown's premise, writing in its decision that using newspapers articles to justify an argument was a "dangerous" strategy.

"(That strategy) would give the whim of public opinion the role reserved for a judge," the appeals court said.

Pascal Boucher, a spokesman for the Crown attorney's office, said his office isn't dismissing an appeal of Wednesday's ruling with the Supreme Court.

Turcotte's lawyers didn't return calls from The Canadian Press.

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Dalhousie's 'Puppy Room' quells stressed-out students

Furry therapy. Students delight in a chance to cuddle away some pre-exam anxiety

HALEY RYAN
Metro in Halifax

Over a dozen Dalhousie University students in huddled in smiling groups around red-vested therapy dogs on Wednesday, running their hands through soft fur or watching the pups perform tricks with their owners.

The Halifax school's annual Puppy Room opened for two days at the Studley campus this week, and expanded to the Sexton Campus on Barrington Street for the first time on Wednesday to bring some warm fuzzies to stressed-out students.

"It's just filled us full of love. Forget about math, forget about exams, it's a time to play with dogs," Shalki Shukla, an international student from India, said with a smile.

Shukla said she had been missing her own dog and looking forward to the event — which ran into a bit of her class time but Shukla said she couldn't pass up the opportunity because "dogs are the best."

"Being an international student always felt very lonely, but coming here it's like 'Oh my God, I got my family back,'" said Internetworking student Monica Sheeba, also from India.

Two golden retrievers and a Bernese Mountain dog, St. Bernard and Labradoodle soaked up the attention for the afternoon, and masters student Joel Scott said although he's not a "dog person per se" it's nice to be around calm and relaxing animals.

"Cats are pretty indifferent to anything," he said with a smile.

Courtroom helper

As two child witnesses take the stand in a Calgary courtroom this week, they will be comforted by a special four-legged support worker.

- Hawk, the first-ever therapy dog to sit inside a Canadian courtroom, was there to comfort as a seven-year-old girl took the stand Tuesday. The girl is testifying against her father, who has been accused of sexually abusing her. Her nine-year-old brother will also eventually testify, with the black Labrador retriever by his side as well.

Brier Stewart and therapy dog Luka do tricks for Dalhousie University students as part of the puppy room at the Sexton Campus in Halifax on Wednesday. JEFF HARPER/METRO IN HALIFAX

Quebec residents trying to rescue loon trapped by lake ice

Residents in West Quebec are trying to save a loon trapped on a partially frozen lake.

The bird can be seen gliding back and forth on a small unfrozen portion of Pike Lake in Edelweiss, about 30 km north of Ottawa. Locals believe the bird is stranded, since loons typically fly south for the winter by now.

Tanya Dare, who lives on the lake, said people are working to rescue the animal.

"We have some leads on boats and people who know about loons," she wrote in an email. "It's wonderful how the community has rallied around this poor bird."

Mae Goguen of the Wild Bird Care Centre said the non-profit organization will care for the loon, but lacks the equipment or staff to rescue the animal. She speculates the loon is too thin or injured to fly away, though that won't make rescue efforts any easier

"Every time you approach him, he's just going to swim under and disappear," she said.

University of Ottawa biology professor Adam Oliver Brown said loons need more than a small pool of water to fly.

"Being diving birds, their body configuration is such that their feet are very far back towards the back of their body ... so they need to run along long stretches of water before they can take flight," he said.

LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO IN OTTAWA

A loon trapped on Pike Lake, Que., Wednesday. LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO IN OTTAWA

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Hundreds mourn woman who aided girls

Germany. Woman came to rescue of girls being harassed by men, was left comatose after fight, pulled from life support

Hundreds of mourners paid their last respects Wednesday to a young woman hailed as a hero, who suffered fatal injuries after intervening to help two teenage girls being harassed by a group of men.

Tugce Albayrak had been in a coma since mid-November following an early-morning altercation in Offenbach, near Frankfurt. She died Friday, her 23rd birthday, after her family gave permission to switch off her life support.

Albayrak's funeral was held outside a mosque in Waechtersbach in central Germany. Her coffin, covered by a green cloth with Arabic script in gold, was placed on a stone table, flanked by German and Turkish flags. Turkey's ambassador to Germany and the Hesse state governor also attended the ceremony, conducted in both Turkish and German.

The bravery of the Turkish-German woman triggered an outpouring of public sympathy in Germany.

Albayrak and two friends came to the aid of two teenage girls who were being harassed by several young men inside a bathroom in a McDonald's at about 4 a.m. on Nov. 15. Later outside, one of the men allegedly hit Albayrak in the head, and she fell to the ground.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The coffin with Tugce Albayrak rests outside a mosque during a funeral ceremony in Waechtersbach, Germany, on Wednesday. Tugce, comatose since mid-November following an altercation at a restaurant, was taken off life support Friday — her 23rd birthday. MICHAEL PROBST/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Climate change

2014 tied for hottest year: UN

Temperature data shows 2014 is currently tied for the hottest year on record, the UN weather agency said Wednesday.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said the global average temperature in January-October was 0.57 C above average, the same as in 2010.

The ocean temperature set a new record in the nine-month period, while land temperatures were the fourth or fifth highest since record-keeping began in the 19th century, the WMO said in a UN report.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sexual abuse

The truth must prevail: Pope

Pope Francis assured Dominican authorities on Wednesday that the truth must prevail in the case of his former ambassador to the Caribbean country who is accused of sexually abusing young boys. Francis met with the Dominican Republic's top prosecutor, Francisco Dominguez Brito, after his Wednesday general audience. Wesolowski has been defrocked and placed under modified house arrest inside Vatican City pending a decision by the Vatican criminal court on whether to indict him.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Airstrikes. Iran believed to have struck at ISIL: U.S.

Iranian jets have carried out airstrikes in Iraq against militants from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in recent days, U.S. officials and independent analysts say, underscoring the strange alliances generated by the war against the extremist group that has beheaded Americans and blown up rivals' holy sites.

Washington and Tehran are locked in tough negotiations over Iran's nuclear program. But at the same time, the two adversaries have been fighting parallel campaigns on the same side in Iraq to defend the Shiite-dominated government — and the region's Kurds — from ISIL militants who have seized large sections of Iraq and Syria.

It has long been known that Iranian troops and advisers have been fighting alongside Iraqi forces against ISIL, but until this week there had been no confirmation of Iranian air activity. The timing and nature of the strikes are not clear, but U.S. officials say some involved American-made F-4 Phantoms, twin-engine fighter bombers that were sold to Iran's U.S.-backed shah in the 1970s and were last produced by McDonnell Aircraft Corp. in 1981.

Qatari-based broadcaster Al-Jazeera filmed a jet flying over Iraq on Nov. 30 that was identified by Jane's Defence Weekly as an Iranian Phantom.

Speaking in Brussels on Wednesday, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Iranian attacks on ISIL militants would represent a positive development.

"I think it's self-evident that if Iran is taking on ISIL in some particular place, and it's confined to taking on ISIL, and it has an impact, its net effect is positive," Kerry told reporters. "But that's not something we're co-ordinating."

In Iran, a spokeswoman for the foreign ministry, Marzieh Afkham, also denied that Iran has co-operated with the U.S.-led coalition but neither confirmed nor denied the Iranian airstrikes against ISIL in Iraq.

Iraq's Prime Minister, Haider al-Abadi, told reporters Wednesday, "I'm not aware there were Iranian airstrikes."

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Brown case. Stepfather apologizes for comments

The stepfather of Michael Brown has apologized for angry comments he made after the grand jury decided not to indict the police officer who killed his unarmed 18-year-old stepson, but said his remarks had nothing to do with the arson and looting that ravaged Ferguson and the surrounding area.

Police said Tuesday they are investigating Louis Head's comments as part of a broader inquiry into the arson, vandalism and looting that followed the announcement of the grand jury decision on Nov. 24. Brown's death inflamed racial tensions in the Missouri city of Ferguson and fuelled a debate over relations between law enforcement and black communities across the country.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Egypt. Gov't to criminalize insulting the uprisings

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi has said his office is drafting a law to criminalize insulting the uprisings that toppled President Hosni Mubarak in 2011 and his Islamist successor Mohammed Morsi last year.

The move intends to ease concerns on both sides of a widening rift over whether the two popular movements expressed the genuine will of Egyptians.

The dispute was further stoked by a judge's dismissal last weekend of a murder case against Mubarak over the killing of protesters.

Just what would constitute an insult however was unclear, as was the time frame for the legislation's implementation. Such a law, however, would infringe on the freedom of expression guaranteed by the nation's new constitution.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Two more women accuse Bill Cosby of sex abuse

Attorney Gloria Allred, left, speaks at a press conference with Chelan, right, an alleged victim of Bill Cosby, on Wednesday in Los Angeles, Calif. Cosby has been accused of sexual assault by approximately 20 women.

FREDERICK M. BROWN/GETTY IMAGES

Press conference. The pair have never spoken about their experiences: Attorney

Three women who claim they were victimized by Bill Cosby appeared at a Wednesday afternoon news conference called by attorney Gloria Allred.

Allred wrote in a news release that she will propose a way the women can "obtain justice" despite statutes of limitations that would prevent criminal or civil cases from being filed.

Two of the women have never spoken about their experiences with Cosby, Allred wrote. The third woman was prepared to testify against Cosby to support another woman's 2005 lawsuit claiming sexual assault by Cosby in Pennsylvania. Cosby settled that lawsuit before it went to trial.

The press conference comes a day after a sexual battery lawsuit was filed by Judy Huth, a Southern California woman who claims the comedian molested her in a bedroom of the Playboy Mansion around 1974 when she was 15 years old.

Huth's lawsuit states she became aware of the psychological damage of the incident recently. Under California law, adult victims who suffered childhood sexual abuse can file lawsuits within three years of when they discover the abuse caused significant psychological trauma.

In recent weeks, more than a dozen women have accused Cosby of drugging and sexually abusing them. Cosby's lawyer, Marty Singer, did not respond to requests for comment on Wednesday, though Cosby's lawyers previously have issued statements characterizing some of the claims as previously discredited and others as untrue. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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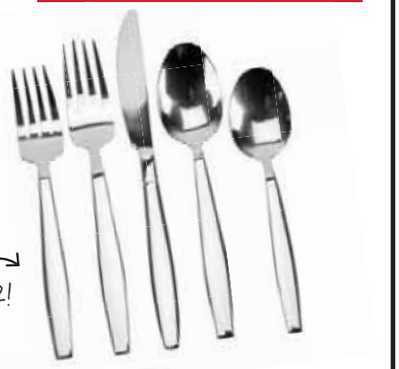

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Sierra Leone

Doctor gets Ebola

Another Sierra Leonean doctor has become infected with Ebola, as the UN health agency said Wednesday that poor data from the outbreak is complicating efforts to measure progress in containing the disease.

Ebola has sickened more than 17,000 people, the majority of those in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Venezuela

Gov't to charge opposition figure

A leading opposition figure learned Wednesday she is being charged with involvement in an alleged plot to kill President Nicolas Maduro, a move she called an attempt to silence her and other critics of Venezuela's socialist government. Authorities informed Maria Corina Machado that she would be charged with conspiracy.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Led by Texas

17-state coalition to sue feds over immigration

Texas is leading a 17-state coalition in suing over the Obama administration's recently announced executive actions on immigration.

Many top Republicans have denounced President Barack Obama's unilateral move designed to spare as many as five million people living illegally in the United States from deportation.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Street rallies

Hungary protests bolstered by U.S.

Buoyed by pressure from the United States, throngs of ordinary Hungarians are fighting back against Prime Minister Viktor Orban's drive to consolidate power through a perceived crackdown on civil liberties.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NYC. No indictment for officer in chokehold death

A grand jury cleared a white New York City police officer Wednesday in the videotaped chokehold death of an unarmed black man who had been stopped on suspicion of selling loose, untaxed cigarettes, a lawyer for the victim's family said.

The decision not to indict officer Daniel Pantaleo threatened to add to the tensions that have simmered in the city since the July 17 death of Eric Garner — a case that sparked outrage and drew comparisons to the fatal police shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown in the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson, Mo.

The Garner case also sparked protests, accusations of racist policing and calls for federal prosecutors to intervene.

Jonathan Moore, an attorney for Garner's family, said he was told of the grand jury's decision. Two law enforcement officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly on the case, confirmed the officer was not indicted.

"I am actually astonished based on the evidence of the video tape, and the medical examiner, that this grand jury at this time wouldn't indict for anything," Moore said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tamir Rice

The uncle of a 12-year-old boy who had a pellet gun when he was shot by a Cleveland police officer told mourners at a memorial service Wednesday that they must be advocates for change through peaceful protest and civil disobedience.

- Tamir Rice's uncle also said that police need to revamp how they train officers while also looking closer at police brutality and the use of excessive force.

Rome. Dig for subway finds ancient commercial farm

Archaeologists have unearthed an ancient commercial farm in the heart of modern Rome, taking advantage of subway construction to explore deeply in urban settings.

They worked some 20 metres down (six storeys deep) near St. John in Lateran Basilica. Today's Rome rests upon medieval layers and, under those, more ancient strata of life.

Rossella Rea, the dig's leader and a culture ministry official, said Wednesday that archaeologists discovered a first-century agricultural business, the closest to Rome's ancient centre ever found, an irrigation basin measuring 35 by 70 metres, and an extensive drainage system near the ancient Aqua Crabra water source.

Notable finds included a three-pronged iron pitchfork, storage baskets, leather fragments possibly from a farmhand's glove or shoe, and traces carved into stone by a waterwheel's repeated turning. Also extraordinary are well-preserved vestiges of willow and other tree roots and stumps. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This undated photo provided by the Cooperativa Archeologia shows lined-up amphoras that were discovered during a subway construction in Rome.

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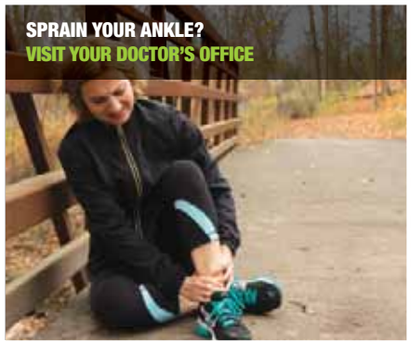

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City of Bhopal remains haunted by world's worst industrial disaster

India. Thirty years after factory gas leak claimed 15,000 lives, survivors demand punishment, more compensation

Various organizations representing victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy burn a banner representing Dow Chemical Co. on Wednesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hundreds of Bhopal's citizens took to the streets Wednesday, chanting slogans and carrying placards demanding harsher punishments for those responsible for the Bhopal gas tragedy.

On the morning of Dec. 3, 1984, a pesticide plant run by Union Carbide leaked about 40 tons of deadly methyl isocyanate gas into the air in Bhopal, quickly killing about 4,000 people. Lingering effects of the poison pushed the death toll to about 15,000 over the next few years, according to government estimates.

In all, at least 500,000 people were affected, according to the Indian government. Thirty years later, activists say thousands of children are still being born with brain damage, missing palates and twisted limbs because of their parents' exposure to the gas or water contaminated by it. Cancer rates in the city are inordinately high.

"I still feel the pain even today. I still see those images," said Mohammed Ismail, a 57-year-old rickshaw driver whose daughter lost vision in both of her eyes after the gas leak. "On every gas anniversary, I feel it would have been better for me to die that night."

In the poor neighbourhoods behind the Union Carbide plant, where the worst of the tragedy unfolded, survivors and their relatives and supporters burned effigies of Warren Anderson, who headed Union Carbide Corp. at the time of the leak, and a banner with the logo of Dow Chemical Co., which bought Union Carbide.

Anderson died in September in a nursing home in Florida. Just after the disaster, Anderson travelled to India, where he was arrested. He left the country while free on bail and never returned.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cause and response

American chemical company Union Carbide Corp. has said that the accident — which took place when water entered the sealed tank containing the highly reactive methyl isocyanate — was an act of sabotage by a disgruntled employee, never identified, and not lax safety standards or faulty plant design, as claimed by activists.

- Union Carbide was bought by Dow Chemical Co. in 2001. Dow says the legal case was resolved in 1989, when Union Carbide settled with the Indian government for $470 million.

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Blast-off. Japan launches asteroid chaser into space

A Japanese space explorer took off Wednesday on a six-year journey to blow a crater in a remote asteroid and bring back rock samples in hopes of gathering clues to the origin of Earth.

The non-tripulated explorer, named Hayabusa2, is expected to reach the asteroid in mid-2018, spend about 18 months studying it and return in late 2020.

A small device will separate from the explorer and shoot a projectile to blast open a crater a few metres in diameter.

The explorer, which will hide behind the asteroid during the blast, will then try to collect material from inside the crater.

Asteroids can provide evidence not available on Earth about the birth of the solar system and its evolution. JAXA, Japan's space agency, said the research could help explain the origin of seawater and how the planet Earth was formed.

Hayabusa2 will attempt to expand on the work of Hayabusa, a previous explorer that returned in 2010 after collecting material from the surface of another asteroid. By reaching inside an asteroid this time, the new explorer may recover material that is not as weathered by the space environment and heat. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An H2-A rocket takes off carrying space explorer Hayabusa2 in Kagoshima, Japan, Wednesday. KYODO NEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A long, long road to recovery

A crane removes the rubble of Jamal Abdelnaser UNRWA School, destroyed in the recent conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza City, Gaza Strip. The first large-scale project to remove rubble from the war started Wednesday, a step perceived as notable on the long path of rebuilding tens of thousands of houses damaged by Israeli artillery shells. Sweden is funding $3.6 million of it through UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, where officials hope to crush and clear 140,000 tons of rubble in the area in one year. ADEL HANA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moving story

From Virginia to Hawaii, 36 days in a moving box

Ashley Barth tells WAVY-TV her cat Mee Moowe disappeared in September as movers packed her family's belongings for a move from Suffolk, Va., to Hawaii — a nearly 8,000-kilometre trip.

Thirty-six days later, in Hawaii, Barth says she heard a faint "meow": Mee Moowe was in one of the boxes. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Some 40 to 60 jars

Missing brains were destroyed: University of Texas

School officials say dozens of human brains reported missing from a University of Texas lab were actually destroyed 12 years ago.

The university said Wednesday between 40 and 60 jars, some with multiple brains, weren't suitable for research or teaching purposes. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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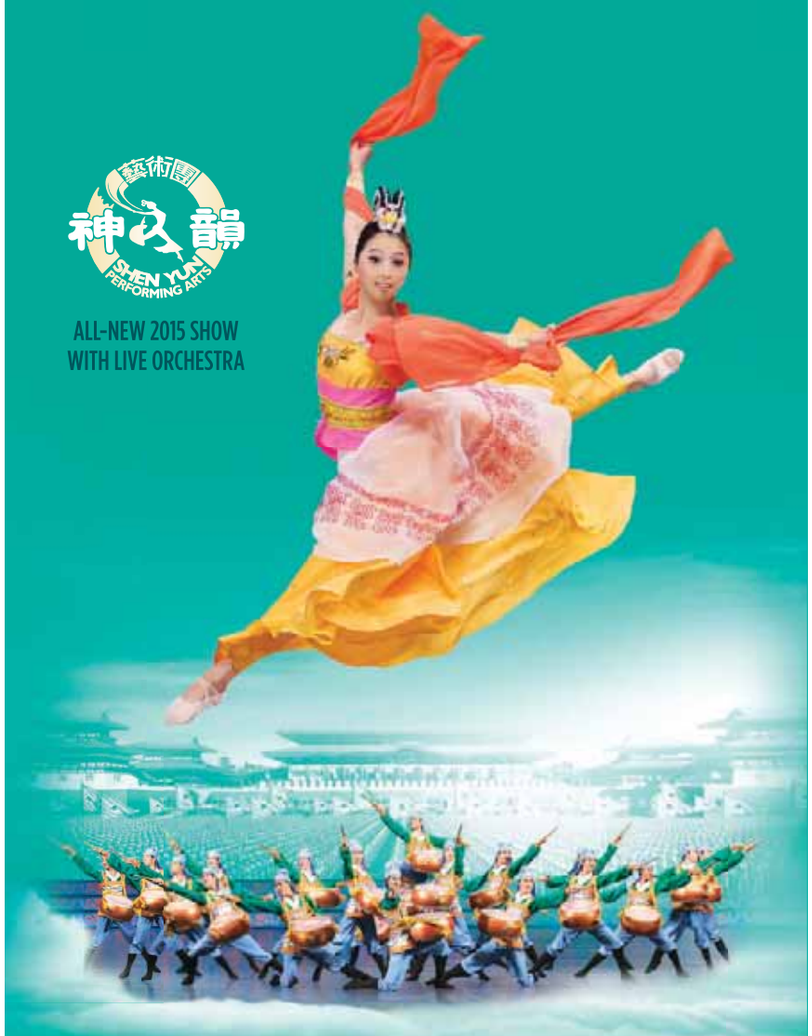

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Mamma mia: New Mona Lisa theory

Leonardo da Vinci. Italian historian speculates renowned face could be artist's mother, who may have been a Chinese slave

The Portrait of Mona Lisa, painted by Leonardo da Vinci, is seen in Paris Louvre Museum. An historian suggests da Vinci's mother, whom he says might have been a slave from China, inspired the painting.
JEAN-PIERRE MULLER/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

An Italian historian's theory that Mona Lisa might be a Chinese slave and Leonardo da Vinci's mother — making the 15th-century polymath half-Chinese — sent online commentators into a frenzy Wednesday.

Angelo Paratico, a Hong Kong-based historian and novelist from Italy, told the South China Morning Post: "On the back of Mona Lisa, there is a Chinese landscape and even her face looks Chinese."

Chinese web users expressed astonishment and disbelief Wednesday, posting dozens of parodies of the painting.

Little is known about Caterina, the mother of the artist, writer, mathematician and inventor, and the identity of the sitter for the portrait hanging in Paris's Louvre museum has long been a matter of debate.

Paratico, who is finishing a book entitled Leonardo da Vinci: A Chinese Scholar Lost in Renaissance Italy, cited Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud's 1910 assumption that the painting was inspired by the artist's mother.

"One wealthy client of Leonardo's father had a slave called Caterina. After 1452, Leonardo's date of birth, she disappeared from the documents," he told the paper.

Many posters on China's Twitter-like Sina Weibo were incredulous.

"I'm so sad that you thought I'm a foreigner!" wrote one, with an image of a frowning Mona Lisa holding two rolls of toilet paper and blowing her nose.

"I'd rather be from wherever I am loved."

Another user replaced her features with unlikely faces ranging from Chinese male comedian Zhao Benshan to British actor Rowan Atkinson, to a grimacing robot holding a Mona Lisa mask.

The topic had been viewed more than four million times and triggered 160,000 postings by midday Wednesday.

"I now understand why her smile looks so mysterious and concealed — it's typically Chinese," said another poster. AFP

The Mona Lisa

The evidence for a Chinese connection appears to be slight, with Paratico saying he was sure "up to a point" that da Vinci's mother was from the Orient. "To make her an oriental Chinese, we need to use a deductive method," he added.

A.I. Hawking warns that artificial intelligence could end the human race

Physicist Stephen Hawking has warned that the rise of artificial intelligence could see the human race become extinct.

In an interview with the BBC, the scientist said that while "primitive forms" of artificial intelligence have proved useful, if the technology is developed to a level that can surpass humans, it "could spell the end of the human race."

He said that advanced artificial intelligence would "take off on its own, and redesign itself at an ever increasing rate."

Human biological evolution will not be able to compete and "would be superseded," he said in the interview Tuesday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Stephen Hawking
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Bell latest to get into streaming service game

CraveTV. Bell hoping consumers craving a cheaper option than rivals Netflix, Shomi

Bell's streaming competitor to Netflix and Shomi will launch to "TV lovers" next week at about half the price.

But it requires a TV subscription with Bell, Eastlink or Telus Optik TV and isn't available to cord cutters.

CraveTV will become available on Dec. 11 for $4 a month, with access to more than 300 titles, including The Big Bang Theory, Corner Gas, Curb Your Enthusiasm, Entourage, Homeland, Orphan Black, Seinfeld, Sex and the City, The Sopranos and The Wire.

The content will be available through the TV providers' set-top boxes, at Cravetv.ca and on Apple and Android mobile devices.

Bell Media president Kevin Crull said the company isn't contractually blocked from offering CraveTV to so-called cord cutters or cord nevers, who don't pay for a TV subscription.

He didn't rule out offering the streaming service to those consumers down the road but said Bell wanted to focus on the 90 per cent of Canadians who do have TV subscriptions.

"The 10 per cent that aren't TV subscribers, in a general sense, they're not TV lovers," Crull said in an interview.

"We've worked hard to keep all of our options for the future open. I will tell you this industry is fast moving. But right now we think this is the smart way to make the product available." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Microsoft CEO has $84 million reasons to smile

Microsoft's CEO Satya Nadella, who was named CEO in February, addresses shareholders for the first time at a shareholders meeting on Wednesday in Bellevue, Wash. Microsoft shareholders approved an $84-million US pay package for Nadella, despite concerns raised by investor advisory group Institutional Shareholder Services over the size of stock grants awarded. STEPHEN BRASHEAR/GETTY IMAGES

Pinterest. Pinning hopes on getting men on board

Social-media platform Pinterest is best known as an aspirational online scrapbook to collect photos of drool-worthy recipes, glamorous redecorating ideas and sartorial snapshots.

But the rapidly growing bookmarking service is happy to see more users "pinning" hockey sticks, wood grain and booze.

Once considered primarily a female-oriented social network, Pinterest is now attracting men in greater numbers, which is helping to drive a strong growth spurt.

A good chunk of those new "pinners" are from Canada, which is Pinterest's second-largest market behind the U.S.

"We've seen Canada grow at a great clip alongside or in parallel with the U.S.," says Pinterest's head of international, Matt Crystal.

"The user base in Canada is 60 per cent bigger than it was about 11 months ago, and we're growing really quickly."

In an online survey of anglophone Canadians conducted for the Media Technology Monitor in the fall of 2013, about 13 per cent of respondents said they had used Pinterest in the past month, compared to 66 per cent for Facebook, 22 per cent for LinkedIn and 19 per cent for Twitter.

About 21 per cent of the female respondents said they had used Pinterest recently, while just six per cent of men said they'd logged on lately.

But Crystal says that gap is shrinking. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Under pressure

Honda expanding U.S. airbag recall

Under pressure from federal regulators, Honda is expanding a recall of driver's-side airbags to all 50 U.S. states.

The airbags, made by Japanese supplier Takata Corp., can explode with too much force, sending metal shrapnel into the passenger compartment.

Takata insists that current recalls covering eight million U.S. cars in high-humidity areas are sufficient. But the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration wants the recalls expanded nationwide after some incidents outside the high-humidity zones.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Consumer debt rising

Equifax. Heading into the holiday shopping season, Canadians already owe an average of $20,891, excluding mortgages

Canadians continue to pile on debt and now collectively owe more than $1.5 trillion, according to the latest figures from Equifax Canada.

The consumer credit-rating agency says the level at the end of the third quarter was up 7.4 per cent from $1.409 trillion a year ago.

Nearly two-thirds of the total owed, or $985.1 billion, is mortgage debt.

Excluding mortgages, the average debt held by Canadians stands at $20,891.

The auto-loan and instalment-loan sectors showed the most significant increases, at 6.8 and 5.8 per cent year-over-year respectively.

"Following a frenzied start to the festive shopping season, with more to come in the countdown to Christmas, we can expect the consumer debt to rise even further," said Regina Malina, senior director of decision insights at Equifax Canada.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Drivers

Equifax said the increase in consumer demand for new credit has been driven mainly by credit-card and auto-credit inquiries.

- In addition, demand for consumer credit has now increased for six consecutive quarters in the West, while activity in the eastern provinces continues to slow.

Top court hears pregnancy discrimination case

Peggy Young (in foreground), a Virginia woman who lost her UPS job because she became pregnant, leaves the U.S. Supreme Court after the court heard arguments in her case Dec. 3 in Washington, D.C. The Supreme Court is weighing how much employers must do to accommodate pregnant workers under a federal law aimed at combating discrimination against them. UPS refused to give Young temporary light-duty work so she could avoid lifting heavy packages after she became pregnant in 2006. WIN MCNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES

Energy East project

Pipeline concerns narrowed down

Ontario's concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed Energy East pipeline narrowed considerably Wednesday following a meeting between premiers Kathleen Wynne and Jim Prentice of Alberta.

After the meeting, Wynne said her concerns were limited to greenhouse-gas emissions from the pipeline project itself, not from so-called upstream emissions. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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VOICES

HOUSING AS A HUMAN RIGHT

Do people have a constitutional right to adequate housing? The Court of Appeal for Ontario recently ruled that this is a matter for governments to decide, not courts, but advocates plan to take their fight to the Supreme Court of Canada. Metro staff from across the country talked to housing-rights champions for their take:

GETTY IMAGES FILE

The distinction the judge in this case made between the role of the courts and the role of the legislature is an important one, says Stacy Douglas, assistant professor of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton University.

"It rests on an idea, central to our democracy, that parliament makes law, and courts merely ensure that this law is being upheld," she said. "However, this is an increasingly grey area as our law continues to change and transform to accommodate demands, for example, for socio-economic rights.

"The appellants in this case are claiming that the overall approach of the government has led to conditions that violate their rights to adequate housing. (But) because there is no constitutional right to housing and because there is no otherwise stated standard for them to use to evaluate governmental policy, the courts claim it must be a matter for the legislature."

As for whether an absence of government action can be considered a violation of constitutional rights, Douglas said "the law is constantly changing, and judges should be very careful about deciding too swiftly what is justiciable and what isn't. Something that is unacceptable today may very well be acceptable tomorrow."

SEAN MCKIBBON/METRO IN OTTAWA

Nova Scotia

Jim Graham,
program co-ordinator,
Affordable Housing
Association of Nova Scotia

Thoughts on the ruling?
I'm not surprised at all.... It's more of a policy issue than a charter issue.

Why should Canada care?
We live in a subarctic climate. If you're not adequately housed in the wintertime, you die. (Also) research demonstrates that ... secure housing is a foundation that you absolutely need if you're going to pursue better health, better education, better quality of life, period.

What unique challenges does your community face?
There's a lack of adequate affordable housing, and the shelter component is reasonably low.

What policy changes would you like to see?
To have the provincial government ... find policies that increase the supply of truly affordable housing, whether that's acquisition, refurbish, whether it's build some more, whether it's deeper rent subsidies.

British Columbia

DJ Larkin,
lawyer,
Pivot Legal Society

Thoughts on the ruling?
Obviously we're disappointed.... When it comes to fundamental rights, like the right to life and security of the person ... that's not a policy decision. It's extremely clear in international law and in Canada's legal obligations that there is some obligation to make sure that people are housed and safe.

Why should Canada care?
We're one of the only rich countries that doesn't have a national housing plan.... This is the most fundamental thing that you must ensure for a healthy society.

What unique challenges does your community face?
Vancouver (has) an increased number of unsheltered, homeless people on our streets. We're also struggling with very, very fast gentrification in our Downtown Eastside ... and people who relied on this neighbourhood as their last stop before homelessness are now being pushed out.

Manitoba

Clark Brownlee,
co-ordinator,
Right to Housing Coalition

Thoughts on the ruling?
It should've been passed ... and they should've been allowed to at least table their documents in support of Canadians who are homeless. I think it was a gutsy thing to take the rights to housing to court.

Why should Canada care?
From a purely economic standpoint, it costs more by far to have a homeless person live on the streets than in housing. It's a humanitarian issue outside of the rights issue.

What policy changes would you like to see?
I would like to see the federal government get back into funding social housing — the way they did for years. They stopped it in the early '90s in order to balance their budget. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation makes millions of dollars of profit every year that just goes into the federal coffers, which needs to go back into making social and affordable housing available to all Canadians. We don't need to have homelessness in this country.

Alberta

Tim Richter,
president & CEO,
Canadian Alliance to
End Homelessness

Thoughts on the ruling?
This is a bump in the long road to achieving housing rights in Canada.

Why should Canada care?
Housing is one of the basic preconditions upon which all other rights are built. People trapped in homelessness are not free — they are wards of largely dysfunctional systems that breed dependence on others for food, shelter, safety. There can be no right to life if your health is compromised by lack of adequate housing.

Interviews compiled by Kristen Lipscombe/Metro in Halifax, Darren Krause/Metro in Calgary and Adriana Mingo/for Metro in Winnipeg.

From refrigerated freebies to parking fundraisers: Initiatives from around the world to help the homeless

Saudi Arabia

Take at your leisure

A man in Saudi Arabia installed a fridge outside his home to allow homeless people to seek food without begging. Good Samaritans are welcome to help stock the fridge.

The Vatican

Shower in the Square

The Vatican is installing public restrooms with showers in St. Peter's Square to cater to homeless men and women. The idea came after the Pope's chief almsgiver met a homeless man who said he could always find food but never a place to wash himself.

France

Gym doubles as dorm

French advocacy group Not Without A Roof provides overnight shelter for homeless families by allowing them to sleep in the gym of their children's school. Eight schools offer shelter to more than 100 students.

Worldwide

Safe place to put your stuff

Several cities around the world, including New York City and Lisbon, provide lockers to their homeless citizens. There are strict rules pertaining to their use, including not using them for shelter.

U.S.A.

Park and donate

Pasadena, Calif., set up 14 orange parking meters around the city that accept cash and credit-card payments that go directly to local organizations that help feed and shelter the homeless.

metro

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Turning the page on family

Interview. Alan Cumming details his difficult childhood in a memoir, and says he's now at ease with missing out on being a dad

Alan Cumming's acting resumé is robust. He's pursued an unusually eclectic career onscreen with notable roles in the likes of X-Men 2, GoldenEye, Eyes Wide Shut, the Spy Kids franchise, Romy and Michele's High School Reunion, Circle of Friends, and, recently, The Good Wife, as resourceful and excitable campaign manager Eli Gold. THE CANADIAN PRESS

When Scottish actor Alan Cumming was 28, he endured an episode he's come to believe was a nervous breakdown — or, as he memorably refers to it in his new memoir, a Nervy B.

He was eight years into a marriage to actress Hilary Lyon and the couple was trying to have a child. As parenthood loomed and Cumming became increasingly swallowed by anxiety, he started to realize he hadn't quite escaped the dark shadow of his own father.

As documented in Not My Father's Son, the Tony Award-winning actor was raised by a mercurial terror who subjected Cumming and his brother, Tom, to a routine of jarring physical violence and withering verbal criticism.

Then 28 years old and considering the reality of fatherhood for the first time, Cumming worried about a cycle of violence. Now 49 and still childless, Cumming says he remains vigilant for echoes of his deceased dad. "I'm not a father, and I've chosen not to be now," he said during an interview in Toronto this week. "Sometimes if I get annoyed with a child, or even my dogs, I sort of think: 'Oh gosh.' I sometimes check myself.

"That will never go away — that worry," he added. "Because I am my father's (son). I have madness on both sides of my family. Let's face it. It's a miracle I'm functioning."

Although Cumming just worked the book's title into conversation casually, it's actually quite a loaded statement for the multi-hyphenate star — one that launched a "crazy summer" that served as the setting for Cumming's memoir.

It was 2010, and Cumming was participating in the British genealogy documentary Who Do You Think You Are? As he was preparing to climb his family tree, he fell into contact with his father for the first time in more than a decade.

His dad was dying of cancer and had troubling news for his family: Alan Cumming, he was certain, was not actually his son but instead the product of an extramarital affair pursued by Cumming's beloved mother.

Just as he was reeling from this revelation, Cumming was reaching profound conclusions in his documentary-aided investigation into the mysterious death of his maternal grandfather, a British soldier named Tommy Darling who had disappeared into a life in Malaysia marked in equal measure by honour and havoc. Cumming documents the dual familial probes in sometimes alternating chapters in his tightly focused memoir. And he does eventually find out whether his own father was telling the truth — but it would spoil the book to reveal that answer here.

For a long time the actor was uncharacteristically terse on the topic of his father. In the U.K., where Cumming's life has long been a subject of interest to the tabloid press, it had been established that Cumming and his father were estranged but the reasons why were somewhat blurry.

Even those closest to Cumming were stunned to read his account of a childhood spent weathering a campaign of psychological cruelty and intimidation. "My friends are shocked," said Cumming, nattily clad in a royal blue dress shirt and black vest.

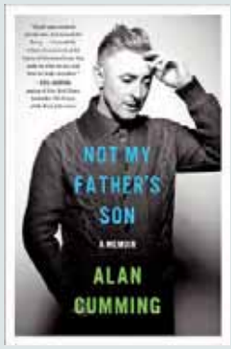
Considerations of parenthood lingered for Cumming, by the way, beyond that anxious time in his 20s.

Now, however — months away from his 50th birthday and years into his marriage to longtime partner Grant Shaffer — Cumming has confidently closed the book on fatherhood.

"I did want to do that, and I really don't now," he said. "I think I got older and I got content. And I don't want to change that. I'm content. So I don't think a child is something that I need to fulfil me anymore."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Daddy dearest?



In one of many chilling memories from his memoir, Cumming writes about his father flying into a rage over his supposedly shaggy hair. His dad dragged him by the scruff of his neck for dozens of yards, threw him across a workbench and shaved his head roughly with a pair of rusty clippers he usually used to shear sheep.

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Author knows food is where the heart is

Cooking up stories. The Hundred-Foot Journey writer Richard Morais says meals are like home for nomads like himself

EVA KIS
Metro in New York City

The Hundred-Foot Journey is out on DVD and On Demand this week. CONTRIBUTED

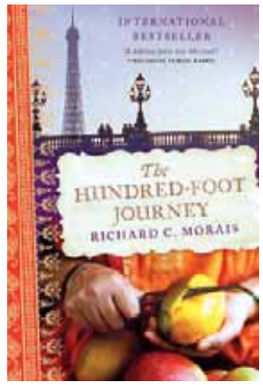
There is a literal trip in The Hundred-Foot Journey, with the clashing French and Indian restaurants separated by exactly 100 feet. In the modern world, most people are making that same journey, though often much farther, for school or jobs or marriage.

For author Richard Morais, the son of an American mother and Portuguese father who grew up in Switzerland, food is something that's become a way to feel at home anywhere.

"People always say, 'You've travelled around the world, where is home?' Well, honestly, I've gotten to the point that home is anywhere I am getting a meal and sharing it with family and friends," he says over dinner at White Street, the recently opened Tribeca restaurant of chef Floyd Cardoz, who created the dishes featured in the novel's film adaptation.

"That's as close to home as I'm ever gonna get, because most of us are nomads, we're a mishmash of cultures, and we're getting more and more mobile."

In the movie, available on DVD and On Demand this week, young Indian chef Hassan Kadam (Manish Dayal) cooks his way into the esteem of Michelin-starred restaurant owner Madame Mallory (Helen Mirren), whose emotional journey is the title's metaphorical meaning. Cooking is Hassan's passion, but also a way to preserve and share his heritage after his family was driven out of India and made their new home in the south of France.



Cooking food with that kind of significance can be an emotional experience — "When you are homesick, the thing you crave most and first is food," Morais points out. And sometimes, necessity can be the mother of great inventions. One of his favourites: balti spice.

When the first wave of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian immigrants arrived in the English midlands, "they of course were homesick for their flavours, and of course they couldn't get all the spices they had in India in Manchester," Morais says. "So they recreated a spice called balti with what was available in England."

The regional blend inspired its own cuisine, with restaurants known as balti houses serving traditional dishes like vindaloos and stews but made with this new kind of spice. Morais recommends using it on roast pork.

One dish that makes him nostalgic is codfish, which recalls memories of his father's rare but cherished home-cooked meals.

"He's sort of macho, Portuguese background, not very verbally demonstrative, but he adored his children, and how he would (show) it was through the food," Morais recalls.

"One of the things that he would do is each of us, on our birthdays, could pick our meal, and so he would go out and make whatever we asked. So I was torturing the poor man, I would say, 'I want pheasant,' so we would have to go out and get a pheasant and cook a pheasant."

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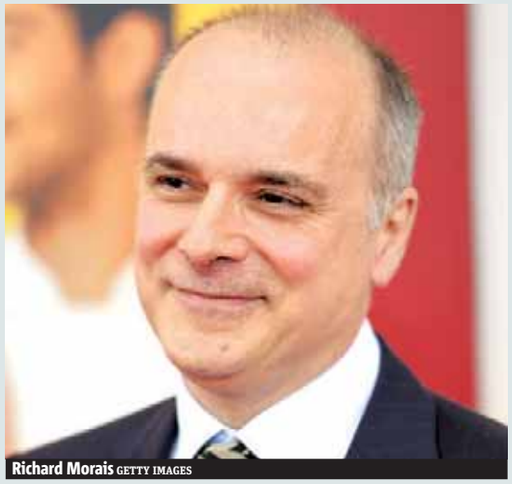
Food at the holiday table



Richard Morais GETTY IMAGES

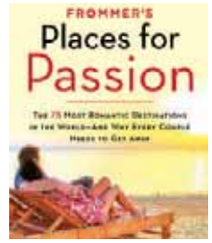
While a holiday gathering can be a great reason for people who may otherwise not see eye-to-eye to set aside their differences, Morais doesn't recommend pushing your luck with the food. "Often it's so stressful and people are so tired," he says. "I think the lower-key meals are the ones where the real magic happens."

Another piece of advice: Leave fusion cuisine to the professionals. Morais still remembers a dish by chef Floyd Cardoz, a barbecue pulled pork-style lamb seasoned with Indian spices. "It was exquisite; it was the perfect fusion. Now, sometimes fusion doesn't work — it tastes like two warring plates — but when it works, it's sublime."

Four books to gift the traveller

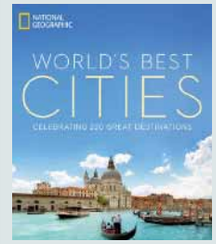
In addition to being present-worthy, these books would make a nice addition to your own coffee-table collection — they're useful for trip planning and could serve as inspiration for your travel dreams.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



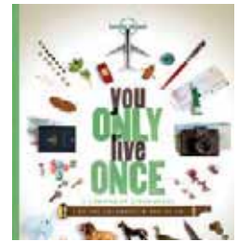
Places for Passion

Places for Passion: The 75 Most Romantic Destinations in the World by Pepper Schwartz and Janet Lever (Frommer's) offers inspiration for couples' getaways from sophisticated cities and exotic destinations to beaches, resorts and outdoor adventures around the world.



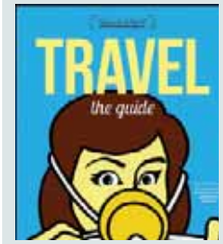
World's Best Cities

World's Best Cities: Celebrating 220 Great Destinations (National Geographic) is a gorgeously illustrated hardcover book that offers an inviting glance at cities around the world, along with curated lists of best cities in categories such as eco-smart, oceanfront and high-altitude.



You Only Live Once

You Only Live Once: A Lifetime of Experiences for the Explorer in All of Us (Lonely Planet) is a lavishly illustrated hardcover that describes experiences rather than places, from tasting the world's hottest chili peppers to the best birding, safaris, train rides and castles.



Travel: The Guide

Travel: The Guide by Doug Lansky (ebook, hardcover). "This guide won't provide hotel suggestions, give you packing tips, or tell you where to go," Lansky writes. "Instead, this book aspires to hold a mirror up to our travel behaviour."

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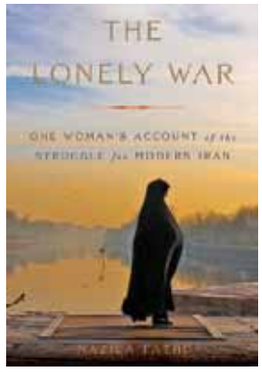
Author has risked her life to change our views on Iran

Books. Iranian news correspondent says people in her home country care far less about nuclear bombs than they do about personal freedoms

EMILY LAURENCE
Metro in New York City

Nazila Fathi CONTRIBUTED



Serving as the Iranian correspondent for the New York Times — among other publications — has put Nazila Fathi's life in danger many times over the past decade, but she never questioned her choice to become a journalist.

"You become so overwhelmed by the events that somehow you don't feel the fear," she tells us, adding that growing up in Iran during the Revolution made her accustomed to living in a fearful climate, and she didn't realize just how stressful it was until she left the country.

Fathi's new memoir, The Lonely War (out Dec. 9) chronicles the aftermath of the revolution and how it affected her personally.

The way Fathi weaves Iran's narrative with her own makes for a compelling read. She tells us that one reason she wrote the book is to reverse stereotypes people have about Iran. This even presented itself when she was finalizing the book's cover.

"The publisher said people wouldn't know this was a book about Iran unless we put a woman wearing a chador on the cover," Fathi says. "Whenever someone wants to use an image to represent Iran, it's a picture of a woman in a chador. This is such a cliché, both for the regime and here in the West. Iranian women want to be free with how they dress. You hardly ever come across a woman who lives here, in a free country, and wears the chador."

In the end, Fathi took her publisher's advice and she's ultimately happy with the cover. "I hope once people read the book that these are not true perceptions of the country and its people."

Fathi says another misconception is that nuclear talk is the most important issue to the Iranian people. "They don't care about it. This is the most important issue in America's foreign policy and Israel's foreign policy but, for Iranians, it's a minor issue."

Instead, she says they care about gaining more personal freedoms. As the middle class has grown — it now accounts for more than 70 per cent of the country's population — Fathi says the people see freedoms that exist elsewhere and they want them.

When Iranian pop-singer Morteza Pashaei died of cancer Nov. 14 at the age of 30, thousands of Iranians flooded the streets to mourn for him.

"Women, who are not permitted to sing in public, were singing his songs," Fathi says. "It's a sign that the younger generation is vying for more personal freedom. They're looking for an excuse to show their solidarity."

It's a battle the Iranian people are still fighting and Fathi's voice is just one of 77 million — albeit a strong one. Her story is worth hearing; she did risk her life to tell it.

Quoted

"The younger generation is vying for more personal freedom. They're looking for an excuse to show their solidarity."

Author Nazila Fathi

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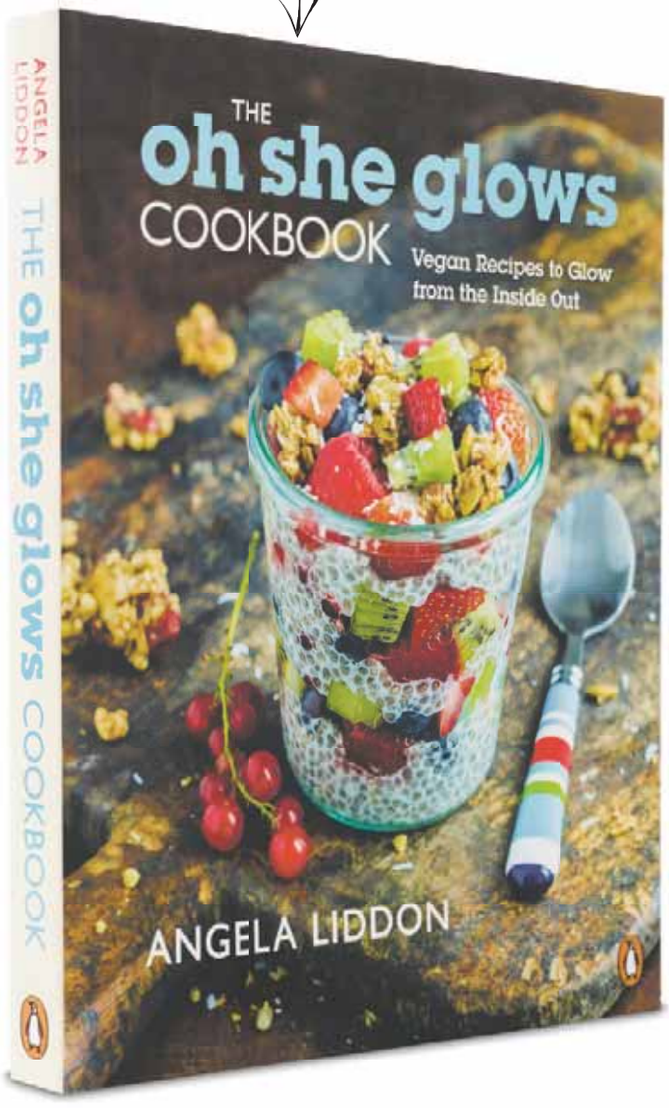
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THE oh she glows COOKBOOK
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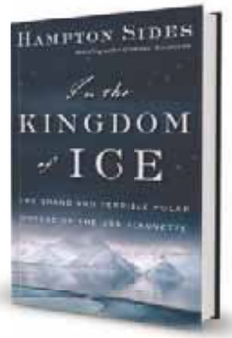

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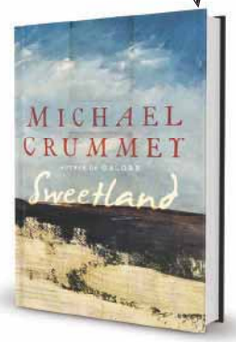

SWEETLAND – MICHAEL CRUMMEY
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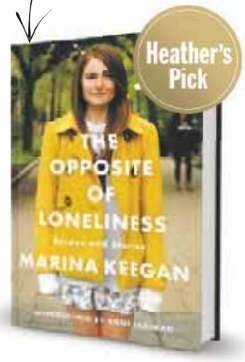

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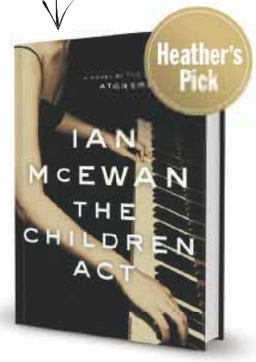

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Man of evil has set his sights on Cinderella

Theatre. Ross Petty is proud to bring the British pantomime tradition to Canadian audiences with his 19th-annual festive fractured fairy tale

Follow along as Andrew takes an intriguing person out for a night on the town, visiting some of Toronto's newest hot spots and offering tips on how you can create your own date night.

DOBBER DATES
Andrew John Virtue Dobson
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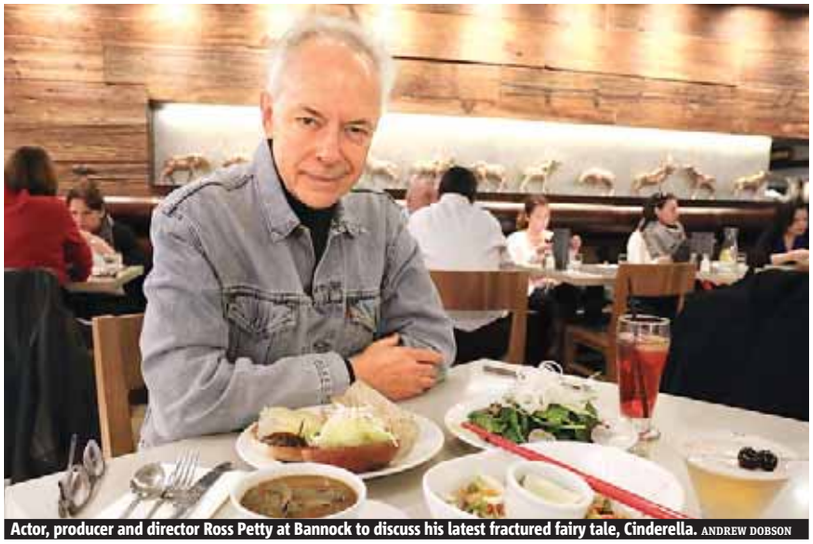
I was looking forward to my date with Ross Petty, one of Toronto's most celebrated actors, producers and directors who each holiday season wow's audiences with his hilarious fractured fairy tales.

Ross Petty as the evil stepmother. CONTRIBUTED

I met Ross at Queen and Bay Street one frigid afternoon for a Canadiana-inspired lunch at Oliver & Bonacini's Bannock. We warmed up our cold fingers while diving into a candid conversation that unfolded over sweet Ginger Pear Margarita, spicy Tortilla Soup and lime-squeezed Chili Chicken Pad Thai.

Just a stone's throw up the road at the Elgin Theatre, Petty and his team will inspire young and old with his 19th family musical extravaganza, Cinderella.

How did this festive tradition come to be? Petty offers up the details: "I was married in 1983 and there was certainly a brouhaha about my wedding to ballet dancer Karen Kain. An English producer in London wanted to present the British pantomime concept to Canadian audiences. The show was a fully British production and Karen and I acted as the Canadian PR hook. We were delighted! When do a ballerina and a musical theatre guy get the opportunity to work together?"



Actor, producer and director Ross Petty at Bannock to discuss his latest fractured fairy tale, Cinderella. ANDREW DOBSON

Petty's shows are known for celebrating Canadian talent. "It would be just as easy to use an actor from a U.S. television show but it's imperative for me to have Canadian talent celebrated in each performance" he says.

Petty is also known for playing the bad guy. "It's what I do. I'm evil," he says with a coy grin. "My persona, presence and voice lends itself to evilness."

This year, he plays Cinderella's evil stepmother. I was saddened that he hadn't dressed in character for our date, but Petty cautions me, "She'd be a horrible date, a man-hungry cougar! She's impossibly overwhelming, a lethal viper."

Where to go before, after

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Show dates: Nov. 21 - Jan. 4

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Guess who'll get the most Grammy nods

Will the Grammys be Drunk In Love with Beyoncé or will they fall for the sad, soulful sound of Sam Smith?
The Recording Academy will announce the nominees for the 57th annual Grammy Awards on Friday, so here's how we think it will play out

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sam and Sia

Sam Smith is a shoo-in for the top categories, including best album for In the Lonely Hour; song and record for Stay With Me; and best new artist. He could also earn nominations in non-pop categories. A remix for Stay With Me, by Mary J. Blige, could compete in R&B; a remix of I'm Not the Only One with A$AP Rocky could contend for best rap/sung collaboration; and his guest appearance on Naughty Boy's La La La could be up for best dance recording.

Sia, too, could be swimming in a sea of nominations, thanks to her skilled songwriting and solo breakthrough. She's written songs for Beyoncé, Katy Perry, Eminem, Maroon 5 and Shakira. She also had her first No. 1 album with 1000 Forms of Fear and a huge hit with Chandelier.

Happily ever after

Although Pharrell's Happy was released before Grammy eligibility — in June 2013 as part of Despicable Me 2 — he submitted a live version of the song, so he has a chance of earning nominations for record of the year and best pop solo performance.

John Legend is in similar shoes: All of Me was released before eligibility, but he could earn a nomination for the live rendition.

Live songs have won in the past: Adele won best pop solo performance for Set Fire to the Rain a year after she dominated the Grammys with her album 21.

Ariana and Iggy

Although Ariana Grande and Iggy Azalea both have a strong chance for best new artist, they could cancel each other out when it comes to song and record of the year. Azalea's Fancy is most likely to be up for top-song honours, but the votes could split between that and Grande's Problem.

Azalea, though, should be a top contender in the rap categories, and Grande could earn a nomination for best pop vocal album for My Everything, as well as nods in the R&B categories.

Ariana Grande

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Beyoncé and beyond

If Beyoncé doesn't dominate in the nominations, it will be just as surprising as the release of her self-titled album last year. The pop queen could finally earn the coveted album of the year, since the release of Beyoncé was earth-shattering and well-received. One thing's for sure: The singer, who already owns 17 Grammys, will easily sweep the R&B categories.

Other notable nods

- **Hot or cold?** Frozen may be up for best album since it is the year's bestselling album with 3.6 million units sold.
- **What's shaking.** While Taylor Swift's album 1989 will qualify next year, her hit Shake It Off could be up for best song, record and pop solo performance this year.
- **Respect your elders.** Barbra Streisand, whose duets album Partners debuted at No.1 and is one of the year's top sellers, could earn several nominations. Tony Bennett, who released a duet album of standards with Lady Gaga, could also compete in the pop and jazz categories.

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Ed Sheeran ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Cuddly, ginger and British, Ed Sheeran is the top dog at Spotify. Sorry, Taylor

Who's the undisputed king of online music? Ed Sheeran is.

The cuddly British ginger was the most-streamed artist in 2014, according to Spotify, with a staggering 860 million individual streams of his songs.

And his album, X, was the most-streamed album globally, with 430 million listens.

I guess that month I spent streaming the Flash Gordon soundtrack on repeat didn't make as much of an impact as I'd hoped. And, of course, there's no mention of Spotify-ditching Taylor Swift in the report, so maybe Sheeran's win should come with an asterisk.

Now, for some truly terrifying numbers: Spotify's more than 50 million registered users streamed more than seven billion hours of music this year — adding up to about 800,000 years of music and maybe a few annoying audiobook ads.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Gaga isn't Swift's lover, but she's into it if Taylor is

NED EHRBAR
Metro in Hollywood

During a recent visit to Howard Stern's radio show, Lady Gaga set the record straight about her and another pop music titan. Stern pressed Gaga with, "Someone called in and said that you are now a lover of Taylor Swift's, that the two of you are making love to one another."

That guy, such a way with words. Anyway, Gaga insists there's nothing of the sort going on — although she'd be totally down if Swift wanted to give it a whirl.

"I don't think she would be into that," Gaga replied, adding later, "If she's into that, she can call me."

In a totally Gaga move, the Bad Romance singer revealed she likes Swift because Swift listens to her music, a piece of info Gaga picked up from a stylist they share. According to Gaga, Swift "was doing a shoot and he was in there styling her … and he goes, 'Taylor Swift is in here blasting Artpop so loud, and she is dancing and she is posing,' and I said to myself, 'I like this girl.'"

Twitter

@idinamenzel
I'm in awe of the moms who drop their kids off at school and actually put on a cute outfit. Pjs and biker boots for me.

@ABFalecbaldwin
I want to be ambassador to Spain. I was actually, on a soap opera.

@ConanOBrien
As we get closer and closer to the end of this tweet, I think it's important that we lower our expectations.

Michael Fassbender

Seems Michael is sweet on a surfing Swede

There's a new target for the jealous ire of all the Michael Fassbender fans out there, and her name is Alicia Vikander. Fassbender and the Swedish actress are reportedly dating after playing husband and wife in the upcoming film The Life Between Oceans. They've most recently been seen out surfing together in Australia, which I guess constitutes a date. While reps for Fassbender and Vikander declined to comment, there's always an anonymous source willing to chime in: "Michael and Alicia are casually dating, spending a lot of time together," the source tells E! News.

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The Daily Dish

COUPLE CAN'T STAY OUT OF THE KITCHEN

In a twist of fate, a local couple can't stop the urge to stay home and cook dinner after switching to new OxiClean™ Dishwasher Detergent Paks. Amy of Grand Prairie told The Daily Dish "I can honestly say WOW." And the switch didn't just impress Amy,

> *"Even my husband notices the difference!"**
> *— Amy, Grand Prairie*

"even my husband notices the difference!"* after discovering that his tough, baked on messes came out sparkling clean. Seeing the difference in how clean their dishes came out has led to a new sparkle from their dishes, and their meals together.

Mothers agree cleaner dishes save time, and their nails.

Mothers rejoiced today as it was announced that using a combination of OxiClean™ Extreme Power Crystals™ Dishwasher Detergent Paks and OxiClean™ Dishwashing 2-in-1 Booster + Rinse Agent has finally made dishes clean enough to eat off of. "This is a big win for nails everywhere" said one local woman who is no stranger to chipping baked on dirt off of cookware. Manicurists in the area have yet to comment on the matter.

Cleaning is now child's play

After a turn of events, a suburban mom is 4X happier after switching to OxiClean™ Extreme Power Crystals™ Dishwasher Detergent Paks. Seeing how easy and effective they are, without having to pre-wash, has not only cut down chore time and improved dish conditions, but also "allows me to spend more of my time with the kids instead of scrubbing dirty dishes," the mother dished. Since the switch, Noelle is spending less time in the kitchen and more time with her little ones.

*All stories depicted within this advertisement are fictional in nature. *Quotes are from real consumer reviews submitted for OxiClean™ Extreme Power Crystals™ Dishwasher Detergent Paks and OxiClean™ Dishwashing 2-in-1 Booster + Rinse Agent on ChickAdvisor.com as of November 21, 2014. Reviewers received free product sample.*

Clean the dirtiest dishes with OxiClean™ Dishwasher Products.

95% OF CHICKS DIG IT† ChickAdvisor.com

†Source: ChickAdvisor.com reviews for OxiClean™ Extreme Power Crystals™ Dishwasher Detergent Paks. Percent of chicks who "dig it" as of November 21, 2014. Reviewers received free sample.

Available at Walmart on Rollback 4.97 each

Conditions may apply. Selection may vary by store. See store or Walmart.ca for details. © 2014 Wal-Mart Canada Corp. Price effective November 16 to December 15, 2014. Any representation, performance claim, warranty or guarantee contained herein is the sole responsibility of Church and Dwight Canada Corp. and is not independently verified by Walmart.

The boys of the bash

There's no need for a simple two-button navy blue affair this holiday season. Whether you're picking something new for a party or on the hunt for the perfect present for a sartorially savvy friend, here's our pick of the season's best suiting with a fun, festive edge.

AFP

Auld Lang Syne

This Black Watch tartan tuxedo jacket is perfect for adding a little extra fun to formal occasions. The matching wool trousers ($265) are by no means a must, but hey, why not? It's the most wonderful time of the year!

J. Crew Ludlow Tuxedo Jacket in Black Watch, $525, jcrew.com

Holiday blues

As ever, H&M, the high-street brand, has some fun options. Try this cotton-blend blazer in an Oxford weave for an elegant light-blue solution to the Christmas party conundrum. Wear it with a thin knit or polo neck for a chic look.

H&M Slim-fit Oxford-weave Blazer, $69.95, hm.com/ca

Denim tailoring

This washed denim sport coat can be paired with a pair of crisp, white trousers for a very modern take on a classic suit look.

Brooks Brothers Washed Denim Sport Coat, $238.80, brooksbrothers.com

Joining fashionable forces

Theory x Mr Porter menswear capsule on sale now

Theory has designed a 17-piece capsule collection for Mr Porter, now available around the world. The clothes range from shirts, jackets and coats to trousers, and also include a couple of suiting options, all in Theory's trademark mix of minimalist designs with modern materials and technical touches.

"The simplistic elegance of this collection perfectly captures the spirit of the Theory esthetic, and their modern approach to design make this a great fit for the Mr Porter customer," outlined Mr Porter's Toby Bateman.

Key pieces include the 4-pocket field jacket in Teflon wool ($695), seen below. Prices for the collection as a whole range from $245 for the white or cotton poplin shirts, up to $1,145 for the leather jacket.

AFP

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Many brides saying ‘yes’ to a shorter dress

Style. From couture to affordable, more brides getting hitched in cropped gowns

Monique Lhuillier’s fashion house shows the Opal, a silk white, re-embroidered, lace, short-sleeved mini-wedding dress
MONIQUE LHUILLIER, DAN & CORINA LECCA / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A model wears the Arielle, and Ostrich feather mini with peek-a-boo crystal beading dress by Rivini by Rita Vinieris.
RIVINI BY RITA VINIERIS / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Helen Bradley isn’t one of those women who fantasized about her wedding as a girl, so when the time came to tie the knot on the 10th tee of a golf course, she wanted to be relaxed, comfortable and economical.

A short gown was just right for her September nuptials, said the 27-year-old bank worker in Madison, Wis.

“I had tried on a few long dresses and none of them felt like me. I’m a very practical person. My mom picked out the short dress from a sale rack and it’s rare that I would like anything that my mom picks out,” she said with a laugh.

Once the domain of older or remarrying brides, short gowns are enjoying a little more of the love, from luxury brands like Monique Lhuillier, Oscar de la Renta and Marchesa to more affordable offerings at David’s Bridal, which has a bustling retail website and about 300 stores around the country.

The short looks aren’t just stand-in dresses originally intended for bridesmaids or cocktail parties. Designers are offering a greater range of shorter styles as more brides break from tradition and personalize their weddings.

“A lot of people are doing more intimate settings, so a shorter dress just feels more appropriate. If they do the big wedding, some change into a shorter dress so they can dance and have a good time,” Lhuillier said.

Ready to rock

“If they do the big wedding, some change into a shorter dress so they can dance and have a good time.”

Monique Lhuillier
Bridal wear designer

Exactly how short is up to the bride. There are minis, high-low hemlines (high in the front and lower in the back), knee lengths, tea lengths below the knee and so-called “transformers,” where a long train or sheer skirt detaches to show off a short dress underneath.

Designer Zac Posen put his own sister in one of the convertibles — in red — for her 2004 wedding.

“Her huge train came off to become a mini and she took it off to Judy Garland’s Zing! Went the Strings of My Heart,”’ he said. “It covered the grandeur of the ceremony and the fun of the party.”

Long gowns remain the clear majority of the $2.6 billion-a-year bridal gown market, noted Darcy Miller, editorial director for Martha Stewart’s bridal site, Marthastewartweddings.com.

But “more and more brides seem to be seeking no-fuss, lightweight and easier silhouettes,” she said. Some “want a dress they can run on the beach in or travel with to their destination wedding.”

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mash-up made in Canada

Smythe and Beaufille to release blazer collaboration

The Canadian design duos behind two notable womenswear brands are teaming up and fusing their styles in a new collaboration.

Smythe co-founders Andrea Lenczner and Christie Smythe have joined with sisters Chloe and Parris Gordon of ready-to-wear and accessory line Beaufille to create a blazer for spring 2015.

For the collaboration, Smythe’s classic Smoking Jacket silhouette has been fashioned from jacquard. Fine artist Eve Gordon — mother to Chloe and Parris — handpainted the imagery on the garment based on a vintage Chinoiserie brocade. The blazers also showcase a Beaufille custom-designed, dragon-emblazoned brass metal button.

“The design community in Toronto is small but connected. Ten years in, it’s always inspiring to meet emerging designers who are making their mark,” Lenczner and Smythe said in a statement.

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Bring it on, Barbara

After four years of an almost-invisible Mrs. Rob Ford, Toronto's fashionistas may finally be in for some eye candy, as Barbara Hackett, the wife of our newly elected Mayor John Tory, steps into the spotlight. Here is a look at three of Barbara's signature styles

IRENE KUAN
Metro News in Toronto

Going sleeveless

Barbara likes to show off her well-toned arms. She opted to go sleeveless in a fitted sheath frock for election result night, wearing a red number with gold accessories, and again on inauguration day in a similar outfit in burgundy.

Accessories

Barbara never goes without accessories. It appears she has her favourite pieces: a dangly black and white beaded necklace that she wore on voting day and inauguration day, and a multi-tone brown scarf she's worn on several occasions.

Colour co-ordinated

Barbara tends to opt for a strong but neutral monotone palette, never stepping out of the universally complementary shades of grey, black and navy and never going beyond two colours. She wore a youthful all-grey outfit with cute beige booties for a photo shoot with the Toronto Star earlier this year, and looked chic in a black blazer, skinny navy pants, and black leather boots on voting day.

FOLLOW IRENE ON TWITTER @METROIRENEK AND ON INSTAGRAM @KUANIRENE

Canadian street style

Spotted in: Toronto

Name: Brit

Age: 27

Occupation: Florist & Bartender

What she's wearing
Vintage 1950s Irving Posluns for La France coat, H&M sweater, vintage dress from VV, boots from the Bay and Coach purse.

Her inspiration
"I like to have fun with prints and silhouettes. I wear clothing that is comfortable and uber feminine. My style icons are the Olsen twins and my friends."

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Poncho perfection

The icy temps make it impossible to get out of bed. Now you can literally wear a blanket around all day thanks to this season's poncho trend.

AFP

H&M knit poncho

A camel-coloured poncho like this one is perfect for staying cozy in the office.
$35.95, HM.com

Topshop multi-stripe cape

Add some boho into your wardrobe with a striped poncho.
$68, Topshop.com

Zara Two-tone poncho

So easy, so elegant, and most importantly, so warm.
$59.90, Zara.com

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08919654

SAVE $5
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08919667

Squash moves past side dish duties

Swedish Meatballs with Squash & Mushroom Stroganoff. This hearty meal will warm you up on cold nights and can be served over a few different bases

Ingredients

- 1/2 lb medium ground beef
- 1/2 lb medium ground pork
- Kosher salt and fresh cracked black pepper
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 2 large button or cremini mushrooms, chopped
- 2 cups peeled chopped butternut squash
- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 can (14 oz) chicken stock
- 1/2 cup whipping (35%) cream
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- Pinch of ground cardamom
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1/4 tsp ground allspice
- Chopped fresh parsley, garnish

1. In a bowl, combine the beef and pork and season with salt and pepper to taste. Using the palm of your hands, form meatballs (we make ours golf ball–size).

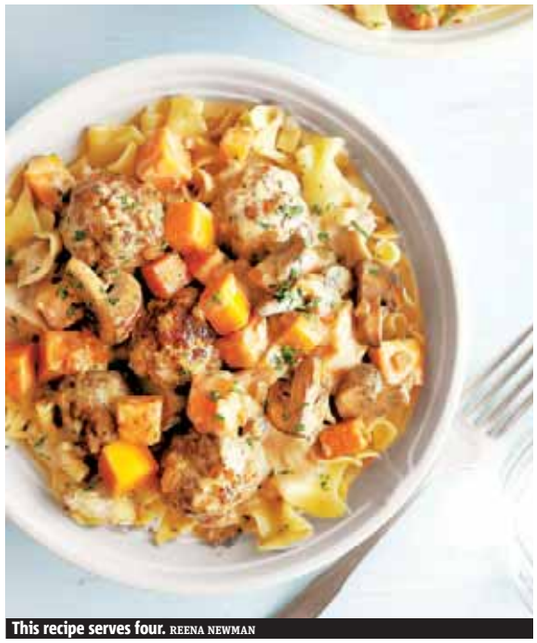
2. In a large, oiled saucepan over medium heat, cook the meatballs in batches until browned all over. Transfer the cooked meatballs to a plate.

3. Drain all but 1 tablespoon fat from the pan. Sauté the onion until softened, about 1 1/2 minutes. Add the mushrooms and squash and stir to combine. Stir in the butter and flour. Cook, stirring constantly, for 1 to 2 minutes, until the flour darkens. Stir in the chicken stock, then the cream and sour cream. Add the cardamom, soy sauce and allspice and stir well. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper, if needed. Return the cooked meatballs to the pan, gently stir to combine and cook for about 5 minutes, until the squash is cooked through. If the mixture is too thick, add a splash of water or milk. Serve immediately, sprinkled with chopped parsley, if desired. ROM THE EVERYDAY SQUASH COOK BY ROB FIRING, IVY KNIGHT & KERRY KNIGHT © 2014. PHOTOGRAPHY © REENA NEWMAN. PUBLISHED BY HARPERCOLLINS CANADA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Cookbook of the Week

Squash in all its glory

Butternut, pumpkin and acorn may be the most popular of squash, but The Everyday Squash Cook introduces us to other varieties. The release by Rob Firing, Ivy Knight and Kerry Knight features more than 100 recipes such as Squash Fried Rice, Fish and Old Bay Squash Chips, Ricotta-Stuffed Zucchini Blossoms and Butternut Cranberry Pudding Cake. METRO



This recipe serves four. REENA NEWMAN

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Gifts THAT MAKE A difference WORLD OF

In Swahili, the word for friend is *rafiki*. Handmade in Kenya, the fun and versatile rafiki is the perfect holiday gift—and can be worn as a bracelet or necklace. With every purchase, make a life-changing impact in a community overseas.

FIND THE PERFECT GIFT AT SHOP.METOWE.COM OR THE ME TO WE POP-UP SHOP IN YORKDALE SHOPPING CENTRE.

Located near the TTC entrance

Festive cocktail party tips

Style gurus Steven Sabados and Chris Hyndman know hosting a cocktail party is a fabulous way to celebrate the holiday season. But without a proper plan in place, your festive affair could be forever remembered as an epic fail. They asked their resident entertaining expert Cocktail Deeva to share her tips on how to throw the ultimate cocktail soiree that will not only impress your guests, but also help you keep your cool. Steven and Chris' holiday specials air from Dec. 15-19 at 2 p.m. EST on CBC Television.

ALL TEXT PROVIDED BY STEVEN AND CHRIS. PHOTOS BY ALEXIS GLINERT.

Invitations come first

Remember, your party is only as good as your guest list, so ask yourself: • Who is coming to the party? Friends? Family? Work colleagues? Will there be kids? • If it's a work event, keep things professional and avoid mixing groups. Be clear about what kind of party it is. • Sending a paper invitation is a classy way of inviting small groups. For larger groups, send an online invitation. It's fast and effective.

Timing and food are crucial

If your party starts between 6:30 and 7:30 p.m., you better be feeding your guests more than a shrimp ring! But if things get underway at 8:30 p.m. or later, serving cocktails and hors d'oeuvres is acceptable.

If you have a limited amount of finger food, arrange the items on a tray and pass it around the room. That'll ensure your Uncle Bob takes one item instead of six, as it's harder for people to pig out when someone is looking at you.

If you're going buffet style, place food in different sections of the house to keep people moving.

Place a small carton or bin in a visible place so folks have a place to throw their used picks and napkins (people always forget that one).

Make sure to give yourself time to set everything up before the party begins. Get ahead by placing dishes out days before and using labels to indicate what's going where.

Holiday Fizz Cocktail

Step 1: Make dark lemonade

Ingredients:
- 2/3 cup water
- Zest and juice of 2 lemons
- 1/4 rubbed sage
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 cloves
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon Kitchen Bouquet
- Carbonated water

Combine water, lemon zest, nutmeg, cloves, sage and sugar. Continually stir and boil for about a minute until the sugar is dissolved.

Remove from heat and stir in the lemon juice and Kitchen Bouquet. Let cool, then strain.

Add roughly 1/3 cup of this syrup to 1 cup of carbonated water or combine to suit your taste. If kept in the refrigerator, dark lemonade can last up to 3 weeks.

Step 2: Add the booze!

- 2 ounces dark lemonade
- 2 ounces gin
- 1 ounce soda
- Garnish with rosemary sprigs

Set the mood

Entertaining 101: Turn off those ugly lights! Strong, overhead lighting can create unflattering shadows on people's faces. Dim your lights, if you can, or use candles to make your guests glow. • Curate a music playlist that keeps the party going. Don't just plug in your personal iPod, hit shuffle and hope for the best. There's something about going from Beyoncé to Bob Dylan that doesn't feel right. • Also be mindful of what music you're playing when you want people to leave — opt for slow jams when it's time to say goodnight. • If you want to go the extra mile, load your playlist onto inexpensive USB sticks and hand them out to guests before they leave. People will love the take-home gift!

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FAMILY FUN GUIDE

BY ASTRID VAN DEN BROEK

Where to go, what to do and how to get there. Here are this week's activity listings

HOLIDAY AT COLBORNE LODGE

Mulled cider. Holiday treats. A wood stove. Swing by Colborne Lodge in High Park to experience the sights and smells of a Victorian Christmas. Noon-4 p.m., until Jan. 4, 2015. (This weekend is the last one for the Wreath-Making workshop, starting at 2 p.m. on Dec. 6 — pre-registration required.) Go to www1.toronto.ca for more.

ALL ABOARD!

Holiday Traditions is an annual holiday celebration at Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington, Ont., featuring the famous RBG Train Show! Listen to choirs and other musical entertainment, and do some crafts and more. Saturdays until Jan. 4, 2015. Go to rbg.ca for more.

BUILD A HOUSE YOU CAN EAT

Habitat for Humanity Toronto's Annual Gingerbread Build is on Dec. 6-7, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Ontario Science Centre. Build a gingerbread house from fully-stocked kits that are provided. Stick around after decorating for a visit from Santa. Go to habitatgta.ca for more.

SHOP AND VISIT SANTA

Visit Santa in his log cabin at the Toronto Eaton Centre. There's a 50-foot-high Christmas tree and reindeer... and for fun, navigate the Christmas Tree maze. Until Dec. 24. Times vary. Visit torontoeatoncentre.com for more.

FROST FAIR

Stroll through Fort York's historic buildings where merchants sell heritage-inspired wares. For children, there are drill workshops, period toys and games, military demos, and printing your own souvenir on the Mackenzie House proof press. Dec. 6 - 7, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. For more, go to fortyork.ca.

FAMILY SUNDAYS AT AGO

Participate in some interactive family activities. This month's theme is Design and Build. Start by constructing a variety of structures, visit the AGO Architectural School for Families, create your own blueprints, build with the Imagination playground, and more. Art Gallery of Ontario, Sundays, from 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Go to ago.net for more.

"Someday I'd like to play on Team Canada." – *Madison, age 8*

Every kid has a someday. It may be something fantastical like flying to the moon, something practical like following their dad into construction or something we all can relate to like wanting to be surrounded by love. No matter what it is, we want to give them the support they need to get there. That's why we're pledging $100 million over five years to help over a million children do just that. Let's make every kid's someday™ happen.

RBC Kids Pledge

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Legal Matters

Transferring condo to son

LEGAL MATTERS
Jeffrey Cowan
home@metronews.ca

We own a condo that our son is living in and he has now asked us if he can buy it from us because he has managed to save up enough money for a down payment. How should we go about this?

There are basically a couple of ways to change the property into your son's name. The first method is simply to gift the property to him which you can do if it is clear of any mortgage or line of credit. This is fairly straightforward and can be done with the same lawyer.

However, you mentioned a down payment, which means that there will be money changing hands and presumably your son is looking to finance the property through a bank. In this case, you will require an agreement of purchase and sale with your son, and your son will need to retain separate legal representation to look after the purchase for him. You can retain your own lawyer who will look after your interests and make sure the money is sorted out. The lawyer for your son will be required to review the status certificate and obtain title insurance for the transaction; both of which are requirements of the financial institution lending him the money.

This may sound overly complicated, but the Law Society requires two lawyers to act when there is a standard agreement of purchase and sale and money is changing hands — even if it is between family members.

Follow Jeff Cowan on Twitter @Cowan_Law or on the website cowanlaw.ca, or email him at jeff@cowanlaw.ca.

Live-work-play is the business

Downtown. South Core development brings residential, retail and recreational mix to city's prime business district

CONDO TRENDS
Duncan McAllister
life@metronews.ca

Toronto's business district is creeping southwards towards the lake. The South Core district is Toronto's exciting new live-work-play community. There's a flurry of development activity going on at the moment that includes the complete revitalization of Union Station, a brand-new GO bus terminal and several prominent commercial and residential towers all currently under construction.

What makes this area different than other international cities is that outside of a few gazillion-dollar, über-elite condo suites, you seldom see such a mix of residential, retail and recreational choices located right in the heart of the business district.

Transit plays a big role in all of this. Metrolinx has been tasked with completing the Union Station renovation in time for the 2015 Pan-American Games. GO transit has long outgrown its busy regional bus depot located across Bay Street. A deal has been struck with commercial developer Ivanhoe Cambridge to build a new GO Bus terminal and two commercial towers at 45 and 141 Bay St., the site of an existing parking lot on the south side of the CN rail tracks. A spectacular, inner-urban green space will extend over the tracks to provide pedestrians with a link to the new station.

As of October of this year, you can walk all the way from Union Station south to Queens Quay through a network of connected glass bridges that run underneath the Gardiner Expressway.

Menkes is well underway with the construction of their One York and Harbour Plaza developments, composed of a new commercial tower and two residential condominium towers and an enormous retail podium at street-level. "A decade ago, that whole area was just this wasteland of parking lots," says Menkes spokesperson, Mimi Ng. "We've got 1,300 condominium residences that we're building in two towers; they're 69- and 65-storey towers."

Of the proposed 200,000 square feet of retail space, the anchor tenant will be a spacious Target Store occupying the second and third storeys of the podium. In addition, a section of Harbour Street will be transformed into a pedestrian promenade which will see an existing Gardiner off-ramp converted into a public park.

Across the street at 10 York Street, Tridel's new condominium development is underway. In a unique collaboration, Tridel has partnered with Build Toronto, an independent land development organization previously owned by the city. The 65-storey tower with 665 suites is slated for completion in the summer of 2017.

One York is part of a development mix of commercial, residential and retail space. CONTRIBUTED

The new GO Bus terminal on Bay Street. CONTRIBUTED

Quoted

"A decade ago, that whole area was just this wasteland of parking lots." **Menkes spokesperson Mimi Ng,** on the South Core district

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New initiative

Lesson from West coast

BRYAN TUCKEY
President and CEO of the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) can be found at twitter.com/bildgta, facebook.com/bildgta, and bildblogs.ca.

About a month ago, I accompanied a group of BILD members on a field trip to Vancouver to learn from their experience as we prepare to bring six-storey wood buildings to the GTA.

British Columbia has been building six-storey wood-frame buildings since 2009, which has led to the construction of more than 150 midrise buildings. Our group benefited from seeing them first-hand as we visited active sites and completed projects.

The residential wood-frame buildings in B.C. are a mixture of market housing and rental and some are mixed use with retail or commercial space at street level. Each provided a unique example of housing options while illustrating the different opportunities and housing choices that six-storey wood-frame construction will be able to provide for the new neighbour.

Our members returned back to the GTA with a renewed excitement to build complete communities in a new way. Seeing these buildings first-hand was the best type of education and I felt privileged to be a part of this exciting initiative as we change the shape of our cities.

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*Prices and availability subject to change or be withdrawn without notice and do not include taxes, E.&O.E.

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What's hot on the condo market

DUNCAN MCALLISTER

1. Uptown

Open house: Spacious and open suite at Yonge and Eglinton in Minto's Quantum South building. Make your way to 2181 Yonge Street, Suite 1103 on Dec. 6 from 2 to 4 p.m.

CONTACT: IRA DAVID JELINEK, 416-464-1022

2. Queen's Quay

Grand Opening: Tridel's Aquavista at Bayside Toronto is now open to the public. One, two and three-bedroom waterfront residences. Head over to the presentation centre at 261 Queens Quay E.

CONTACT: 416-514-2710, TRIDEL.COM

3. Distillery District

Open house: A condo loft suite in the Distillery District. Two bedroom, two bathroom with wrap-around balcony. Visit 33 Mill St., Dec. 6 and 7 from 1 to 4 p.m.

CONTACT: KENNETH YIM, 416-906-0080

4. Kingston Rd.

Holiday market: Kingston&Co condominiums presents the Upper Beach holiday market. Head over to 1089 Kingston Rd., and the parkette just east of the presentation centre. Dec. 6 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

CONTACT: 647-558-5500, KINGSTONANDCO.CA

Holiday decor

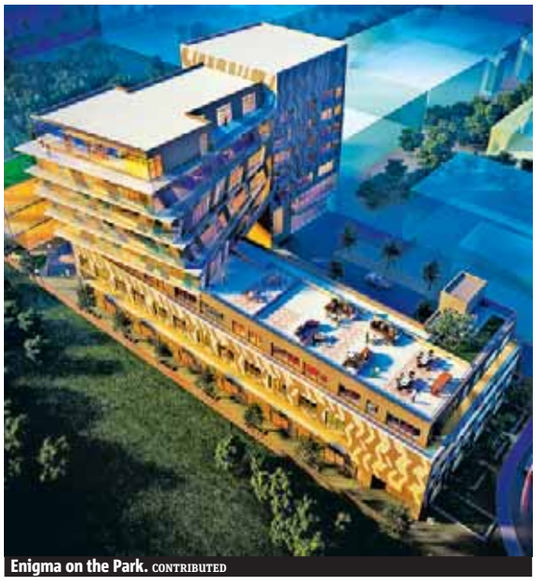
Go glam with Art Deco-inspired pieces

Art Deco mirrored boxes
HOMESENSE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Steeped in black with metallic accents, Art Deco-inspired geometric prints may channel the Roaring '20s, but offer a timeless alternative to seasonless style.

Homesense design expert Tamara Robbins Griffith said a ceramic vase adorned with a graphic pattern can serve as a great centrepiece pre- and post-holidays. While the festive season is in swing, it can be used to house a floral arrangement of winter-greens, later shifting to a mantle or sideboard as a solo statement piece, she noted. Geometric-patterned cushions also team well with pillows that bring the bling with embroidered, hand-beaded designs that can be used as a luxurious accent well into winter.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Enigma on the Park. CONTRIBUTED

Lofts and towns back onto park

Meet the condo

- **What.** Enigma on the Park
- **Builder.** Aragon Properties Ltd.
- **Architect.** Quadrangle Architects
- **Location.** 138 St. Helens Ave., Bloordale Village
- **Building.** Nine storeys with 86 condo lofts and townhomes
- **Sizes.** From 422 to 1,567 sq. ft.
- **Pricing.** Starting at $231,900
- **Status.** Pre-construction, now selling
- **Occupancy.** Summer 2016
- **Website.** aragon.ca

Project overview

A boutique-style condominium development is coming to the Bloordale neighbourhood. This contemporary mid-rise building with 86 loft-style condominiums and parkside townhomes represents a bold step from developer Aragon Properties and one of Toronto's leading architectural firms, Quadrangle Architects.

Location and transit

Nestled within the emerging Bloordale neighbourhood, this transit-friendly location is a seven-minute walk from Lansdowne TTC subway station and Bloor GO Station, which will be the central stop of the future Union Pearson Express. You can be in the downtown core within 40 minutes.

Building amenities

The condo will include a fully equipped gym, theatre, rooftop lounge with fire pit, barbecue and a dog washing station. Suites will feature hardwood flooring, nine-foot ceilings, sliding doors in living spaces and most will have a patio or balcony.

In the neighbourhood

The building backs onto MacGregor Park. A range of new boutique shops, cafés, restaurants and markets are located within walking distance along Bloor Street West. There's an emerging arts and culture scene with the influx of small galleries and studios in the neighbourhood.

Rustic decor. Bend the Yule with seasonless accents

It's time to bring the great outdoors in-house, as nature-inspired elements are proving to have evergreen appeal.

The last five years have seen a resurgence in rusticity and reclaimed furnishings channelling the vintage, country look, said Ottawa-based interior designer and Rona expert Ulya Jensen.

For a festive twist on the trend, Jensen suggested displaying multiple cork wreaths in a front entryway that can be used beyond the season as photo or mirror frames.

From prints on pillows to forms fashioned from glass, Jensen said images of animals are "huge in decor," evidenced by whimsical woodland creatures displayed as ornaments.

"You could take a couple of the owls, a couple of the birds and set them in a little ficus tree that you might have on your condo patio for year-round." Jensen also said replacing a bowl of Christmas balls with acorn ornaments can make a really nice centrepiece that conjures up a "very woodsy, rustic feel. A cluster of birch tree candleholders in varying heights can also work well as a focal point in a small space, she noted. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Birch tree candle holder RONA HOME & GARDEN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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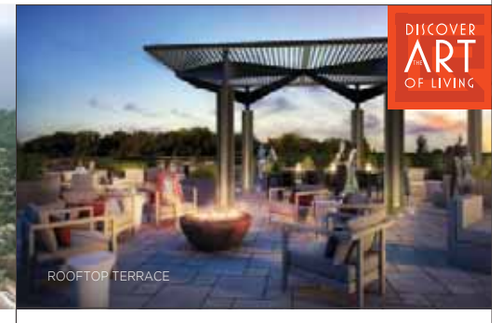

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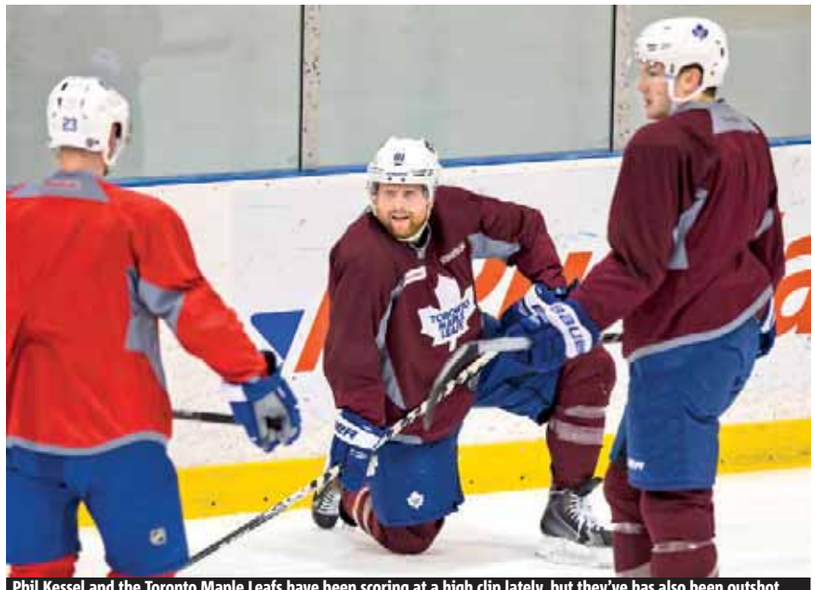
Leafs show warning signs while winning

NHL. Toronto has had some flattering scorelines of late, but is the club simply carrying on a trend from its troubled past?



Phil Kessel and the Toronto Maple Leafs have been scoring at a high clip lately, but they've has also been outshot regularly at the same time, a trend that preceded the club's collapse last season. BERNARD WEIL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

This is all new to David Booth, playing on a team that can score when it needs to, playing on one with such skill.

"(Last year) in Vancouver, we were a good goal-scoring team, but the games here, I mean, the back-to-back games, six goals, five goals. The scoring," said the first-year Maple Leafs winger. "Man, this is a good team. It really is."

While it's new to Booth, fans have seen this before. Last year. And it didn't end well.

And it seems to be happening again.

The Maple Leafs are routinely getting outshot, out-chanced and outplayed. Yet they are still winning, even making it look easy some nights.

This year, at least, the Maple Leafs know that the whole "getting outplayed but winning anyway" thing can't continue.

"I think everyone realizes the way we have to play to be successful," said forward James van Riemsdyk. "You realize you can't just play on skill. You play with structure and you sacrifice. It's not always the glamorous play. You just have to get it in deep and not make a bad play instead of making a great play.

"When you buy into doing that, it makes everyone else's job easier."

Shot disparity

158-139

In the last five games (4-0-1), the Leafs have outscored the opposition 23-12, but have been outshot 158-139. In total shots, including missed and blocked ones, the Leafs have been outshot 321-270 over those five games.

The problem is, lately, they haven't been doing that.

The opposition has had the puck 54 per cent of the time. A troubling trend from last year, one that was supposed to be countered with smarter puck possession play this year.

The bad habits that were covered up by timely scoring and good goaltending that came back to haunt them last season are reappearing this season.

This year, however, the Leafs are not in denial about it. They get it.

"You win a game and we say we have to play better," said Booth. "We do have to tighten up things. You always have to learn. Every game there's something to learn. You're never perfect."

There are more than a few areas that suggest the Leafs are a better team than last year's.

The big thing, they are not blowing leads in the third period, something they did 23 times last year.

In fact, they are a perfect 10-0-0 when scoring first, and a perfect 10-0-0 when leading after 40 minutes.

This suggests they are mentally stronger this year.

"We have a different team; we have a different group of guys," said van Riemsdyk. "We have to play consistent in our structure, and play smart with the puck."

For now, the Leafs will happily ride their offensive juggernaut while they work on fixing their flaws. Even if fixing their flaws takes time.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MLB. Saunders trade all but ends Cabrera era in T.O.

Michael Saunders GETTY IMAGES

The Toronto Blue Jays acquired outfielder Michael Saunders from the Seattle Mariners on Wednesday in exchange for left-hander J.A. Happ in a deal that essentially closes the door on the possibility of free agent Melky Cabrera returning to the team.

Saunders, a 28-year-old Victoria native, is expected to be the everyday left-fielder for the Blue Jays.

Happ was uneven over parts of three seasons in Toronto. He was 11-11 in 2014 with a 4.22 ERA over 158 innings.

His departure improves Aaron Sanchez's chances of becoming a starter.

Saunders appeared in 78 games and hit .273 with eight homers and 34 RBIs for Seattle. He's shown potential but has struggled with staying healthy.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

In Texas. Howe treated for dehydration: Family

Gordie Howe GETTY IMAGES FILE

Gordie Howe was hospitalized for dehydration, not another stroke, his family has said in a statement.

The fear was that the 86-year-old had another severe stroke Monday after showing diminished consciousness for more than 30 minutes, the family said.

Howe was transported to University Medical Center, in Lubbock, Texas, where an MRI revealed that he did not have another severe stroke like the one that initially hospitalized him in late October.

He is being treated for dehydration, and there are other problems with Howe's condition.

"He is having difficulty eating solid foods at this time, has slurred speech and has been unable to walk for more than three weeks now," the family said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Death of a legend

The sport of hockey was "elevated forever" by Jean Béliveau's "character, dignity and class," NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said Wednesday after the iconic player's death at the age of 83. Here are just some of the highlights from Béliveau's storied career with the Montreal Canadiens:

Stanley Cups won

17

His name is on the Stanley Cup a record 17 times, having won the mug 10 times as a player and seven as an executive.

Awards

Art Ross Trophy for most points (1956), Hart Trophy as NHL MVP (1956, 1964), Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP (1965).

Points

1,219

When Béliveau retired in 1971, he was the Habs' career leader in points with 1,219. That's 507 goals and 712 assists.

Playoff points

176

He's the NHL's all-time leading playoff scorer with 176 points in 162 games.

Jean Béliveau in April 1967. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

NFL. Bills in Toronto series sacked for good

It started out in 2008 as a dream to bring the NFL to Canada.

But after six years of manufactured hype and lacklustre games, the Buffalo Bills in Toronto series has been blown up for good.

The Bills and Rogers Communications, who were partners, agreed on Wednesday to terminate the four remaining years left on the series.

The NFL team and Rogers had reached another deal in 2013 to extend the series for five more years, but in March, both parties announced the series was going on hiatus as they conducted reviews.

Upon hearing the news of its death, fans rejoiced on social media. One person called the series "an abomination" and another tweeted that this was the "best news so far today."

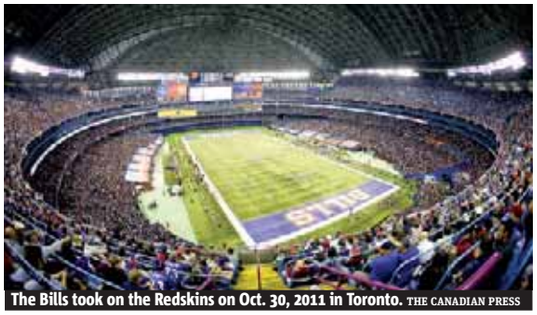
The 2008 agreement had the Bills playing one "home" game a year in Toronto for five years through to 2012, plus three pre-season games (later reduced to two).

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Drinking the Haterade

Bills players hated the series, in which they were 1-5.

- Huge numbers of fans in Western New York boycotted the series, viewing it as a step to ultimately move the team to Toronto.



The Bills took on the Redskins on Oct. 30, 2011 in Toronto. THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLS

TFC declines option on DeRo

The DeRo show may be over in Toronto.

Toronto FC has declined its contract option on Dwayne De Rosario, meaning the former Major League Soccer MVP's second playing stint with the club is likely over.

De Rosario can still be traded or selected in either the expansion draft or Stage 1 of the ensuing re-entry draft. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Premier League

Chelsea effective without Costa

Didier Drogba and Loic Remy showed Chelsea can cope without injured top scorer Diego Costa on Wednesday, with the backup strikers both scoring as the Premier League leaders swept aside Tottenham 3-0 to extend their unbeaten start to the season.

Eden Hazard also scored for Chelsea.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Raptors leaning even more on team effort

NBA. With all-star DeRozan nursing injury, Dinos' cohesiveness being put to the test

It has been a constant refrain from the Raptors since Friday when DeMar DeRozan suffered the first significant injury of his NBA career.

It's all for one, they've said.

It has to be a collective effort, they assert.

No one has to try to do too much, they vow.

So far, so good.

It is a small sample size, just two games heading into one late Wednesday night here against the Utah Jazz, but the sharing process on offence has worked out just like the Raptors said it needed to.

After all, it is logical that no one player could provide the nearly 20 points a game the all-star DeRozan would put up on an average night.

In a win at Sacramento on Tuesday, six players scored in double figures in one of the more balanced attacks of the season. In a loss to the Los Angeles Lakers on Sunday, there were five who scored 10 points or more, even if Kyle Lowry took more shots in that game (28) than he has in any other game he's played for Toronto.

"I'm always going to be comfortable at the end of the day," Lowry said after the Sacramento game. "I still got to go out there and do my job. There might be a little bit more of a scoring load on me, but I still have to do my job.

"At the end of the day, I'll always play my game. Of course we miss DeMar, we wish him back as soon as possible, but until then I just have to do my job."

As does everyone else and there is one factor that should be considered.

The Raptors have spent most of the last year extolling their team-oriented existence, how they are a band of brothers more interested in the whole than any individual accolades.

Now those words are being put to the test; it's easy to speak freely when there's an all-star swingman around to make things easier.

"DeMar going down is definitely a huge loss for us, but we still have key pieces, we still have guys who can play, we have scorers out there," said Patrick Patterson.

"We know with him going down, other people have to step up ... I guess our unity, our togetherness, the brotherhood, the family environment that we have going on will just make us stronger."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Trip to Utah

Go to metronews.ca to find out how the Raptors fared against the Jazz on Wednesday night.

Quoted

"We want to get back in the playoffs and play for something special, so we needed this win and we went out there as a team and we got it."

Raptors guard Greivis Vasquez following Tuesday night's victory over the Kings

Point guard Kyle Lowry and his Raptors teammates acknowledge that not one player can instantly provide the 20 points per game missing in DeMar DeRozan's absence. STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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AUGMENTED REALITY

Stuck on 12 Across? Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

→ See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Stay calm when dealing with relationship problems. According to the planets everything will come right in the end so why upset yourself?

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Do you focus on what others expect you to do or what you want to do? Only you can decide but if you try to get the best of both worlds you may end up with neither.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
There will be opportunities to improve yourself, personally and professionally, over the next few days but there will also be challenges that force you to make far-reaching changes.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
The only thing worse than allowing yourself to be anxious about a money matter is pretending there is nothing wrong at all. A sensible balance is needed to find a solution.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You can perform an important service for a colleague today, a service that will put them in your debt. It's nice to know you can call on a favour in return.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You must control any tendency you may have to go to extremes, especially when involved in demanding physical and mental activities. Balance.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
If you hope for the best today, you will get it. What you need to realize is that you always attract into your life the kind of luck you think you deserve.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You may be in a serious frame of mind but not everyone shares your solemn outlook. Have you considered the possibility that they've got it right and you've got it wrong?

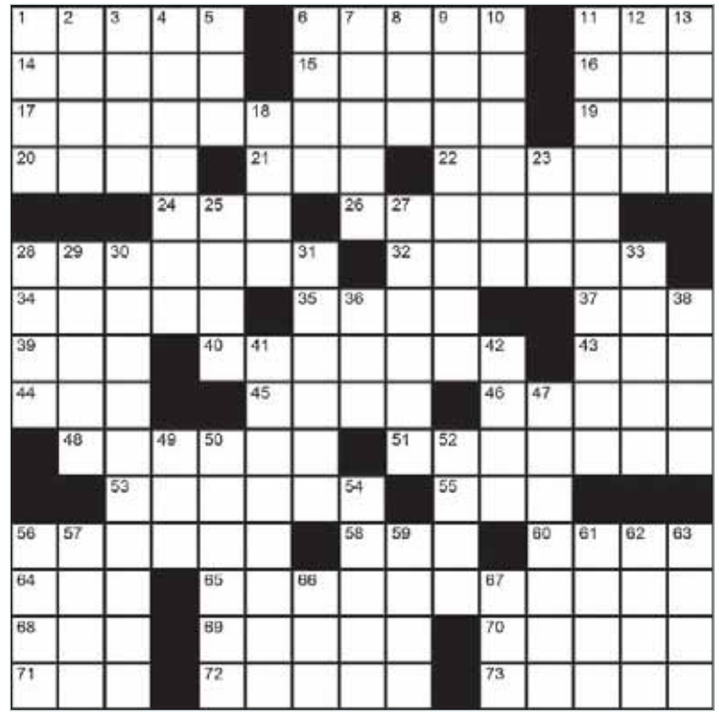
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Today's Sun-Uranus link means there are major changes on the way, changes that will benefit you in so many ways. If there is a creative project you have been toying with now is the time to get serious about it.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You are in one of your rare extravagant moods and are determined to indulge. A few days from now you may regret spending so much on so little, but for now you don't care.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
What seems a major issue to some is no more than a sideshow to you. You're in one of those moods when you can't take anything too seriously.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
What occurs over the next 24 hours will remind you not all things in life are as predictable as you might like them to be.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



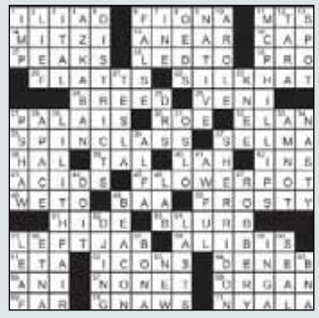
Across

1. Finely chop
6. Britney Spears, Princess __ __
11. Radio types, e.g.
14. Mid-'90s sitcom, "__ Own": 2 wds.
15. Airport arrival
16. Scoundrel
17. End a relationship: 3 wds.
19. Sash sort
20. Start to 'sack'
21. 'South' suffix
22. This battle is on!: 2 wds.
24. Tavern drink
26. Actor Gabe
28. Admiral in Antony and Cleopatra
32. Directs
34. Jean __ (Quebec pharmacy chain)
35. "The Godfather" (1972) role
37. 'Rem' ender (TV clicker)
39. Affixed, abbreviated
40. Trailblazer
43. Feminine side
44. Morse Code bit
45. 'Trick' suffix
46. Australia's gemstones
48. Dan Aykroyd's "Coneheads" (1993) character
51. Saskatchewan village; or, singer Aaron
53. Calgary band, __ and the Dark
55. Wilmington's US state
56. Safe place
58. Fruity drink
60. Chunks
64. Tokyo, formerly
65. Historic part of Quebec's largest city: 2 wds.
68. Hot Balloon link
69. "__ Gold" (1997)
70. Ron Weasley's li'l sister
71. 'Inc.' cousin
72. Cup: French
73. Haze/pollution mixtures

Down

1. Fake
2. Aerosmith's "Love __ __ Elevator"
3. The Big Easy
4. Criminal
5. Verdi aria: "__ Tu"
6. Alphabetic sequence
7. Get an 'F'
8. Gambling game, __ Gow
9. How Tiny Tim gets through the tulips: 2 wds.
10. Mortar and __
11. Canadian brand of whisky: 2 wds.
12. __ Wawa (SNL character)
13. Mix
18. Therm. reading
23. Freelancer's encl.
25. 5th Dimension's "__, __ and Away"
27. Sailor's 'backward'
28. Mil. school
29. __ _ '_' (Did fine on the exam)
30. __ House Provincial Historic Site (Home of Alberta's first Premier)
31. "_ __ sante!" (To your health!, in French)
33. Tranquil
36. Dvorak's "Symphony No. 9 __ _ Minor"
38. Massachusetts' motto starter
41. Ottawa-born country singer Kira
42. Amble
47. "Scott __ vs. the World" starring actor Michael Cera
49. Bucharest money
50. Certain canoe
52. Biblical garden
54. Titles
56. Authentic
57. Revise
59. Pharmacy quantity
61. Vintner's prefix
62. Loud sound
63. Singer Mr. Stone's
66. Cap-__-Rosiers (Village in Quebec, home of Canada's tallest lighthouse)
67. "30 Rock" sketch, '_ _ _ with Tracy Jordan'

Yesterday's Crossword

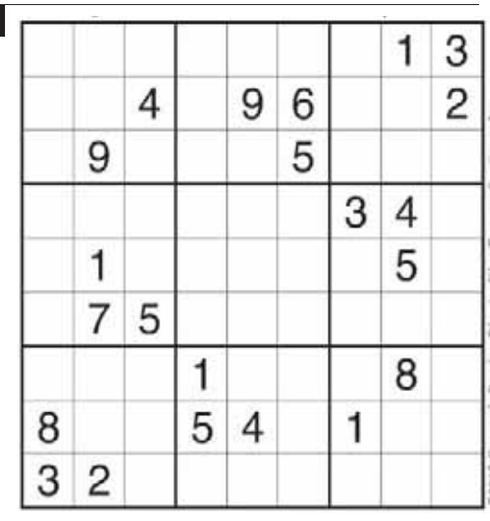


Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



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Yesterday's Sudoku

9	3	4	6	2	5	1	7	8
6	7	5	3	8	1	4	9	2
1	8	2	7	4	9	5	3	6
8	5	3	4	9	2	7	6	1
4	9	7	1	6	8	3	2	5
2	6	1	5	3	7	9	8	4
7	1	8	9	5	6	2	4	3
3	2	9	8	1	4	6	5	7
5	4	6	2	7	3	8	1	9

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